

Moscow's Line on Arms Control

By Myron Hedlin

The Andropov legacy in Soviet arms control policy is one of meager accomplishment and a high degree of continuity in substance and strategy with the last portion of the Brezhnev era. Surveying the period of Yuriy Andropov's general secretaryship and the early months of Konstantin Chernenko's, it is impossible to point to a single change in Soviet arms control posture that clearly contradicts Leonid Brezhnev's approach.

Andropov's prolonged illness and withdrawal from all public and (one must assume) most private political activities during his final months only partly explains this immobility. The incapacitation of the General Secretary probably caused the postponement of important decisions, including decisions on arms control. The question of who would succeed Andropov, which undoubtedly asserted itself with increasing force as his inability to resume official functions dragged on, may also have produced an atmosphere of contention and stalemate within the leadership. Such a climate would hardly have been conducive to bold initiatives in the area of primary international concern to the USSR: defense and arms control policy vis-à-vis the United States. Andropov's illness alone, however, does not account for the lack of dynamism in this area during the 15 months that he was the top Soviet leader, since he advanced the framework of the Soviet arms control posture only marginally even during the period when he was still publicly active, i.e., from November 1982 to August 1983.

Other factors appear to bear greater responsibility for Soviet inertia on disarmament issues. The atmosphere of mutual suspicion already present in East-

West relations when Andropov assumed the reins of power seemed to further accentuate the Kremlin leadership's long-standing reluctance to seize the initiative and modify its arms control proposals. The experience of the 1970's and 1980's strongly suggests that major arms control agreements between the United States and the Soviet Union are more easily reached in periods of improving relations than in times of tension. Certainly, as US-Soviet relations worsened during the Andropov period, Soviet leaders appeared especially determined not to provide substantiation for the arguments of the Reagan Administration that Moscow would respond to an enhanced US defense posture with greater flexibility at the negotiating table.

The Kremlin's preoccupation with the effort to stop NATO deployment of US Pershing II and cruise missiles in Western Europe, moreover, had the apparent effect of virtually freezing all other arms control negotiations pending the success or failure of that effort. The Soviet disruption in November–December 1983 of the three most important East–West disarmament negotiations as NATO missile deployments began made clear the key role in Soviet thinking played by the struggle over those missiles.

The aim of this article is to lay out the fundamentals of Soviet arms control posture as they have evolved since Brezhnev's death, relying primarily on Soviet public statements but with the aid of Western press reports as well. These Soviet statements, of course, serve a propaganda function. That, in turn, necessitates a careful, conscious effort to separate rhetoric from substantive reflections of the Soviet position on both general and specific questions of arms control. While it is impossible to assert with absolute confidence that any single element of Moscow's publicly articulated arms control position represents the Kremlin's privately held view, discriminating use of the public record has given surprisingly accurate indications—judging from subsequent Soviet actions—of

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Soviet negotiator Yuliy Kvitsinskiy breaks off the INF talks in Geneva on November 23, 1983, the day after the West German Bundestag voted to permit the deployment of Pershing II missiles in the FRG.

—Michael Philippot, Jacques Pavlovsky, and Arnel Brucelle/SYGMA.

Soviet intentions and perceptions. There is no convincing evidence that this correspondence between Soviet statements and Soviet perceptions of arms control questions has ceased to exist.

Basic Strategy

The Kremlin's basic disarmament strategy during the Andropov period was, first of all, oriented toward encouraging opposition to US arms control and defense policies, particularly among West Europeans. This effort had as its primary goal stopping deployment of US missiles in Europe and, at the same time, exerting indirect pressure on the US to become more accommodating toward Soviet disarmament interests, especially at the intermediate-range nuclear force (INF) negotiations in Geneva. This strategy became more obvious as the date for the arrival of US missiles in West Germany, Great Britain, and Italy approached at the end of 1983, but it had already clearly emerged under Brezhnev. Andropov himself testified to the im-

portance he attributed to the fight for world opinion in his June 1983 speech to the CPSU Central Committee plenum, asserting that a highly significant struggle was going on "for the hearts and minds of billions of people in the world."¹ In this struggle, in order to give its policies the appearance of dynamism and flexibility, the Kremlin repackaged and repropounded a number of its old disarmament proposals. Soviet confidence-building proposals presented in January 1984 at the Stockholm Conference on Disarmament in Europe (CDE) and Soviet proposals at the United Nations last August for a treaty banning the use of force in and from space are but two examples of such repackaging.

Second, Soviet arms control strategy remained reactive and incremental. Andropov clung tightly to Moscow's traditional approach of responding to American actions and providing as few clues as possible to concessions the Soviet Union might be willing to make for the sake of a compromise solution. The Kremlin's

¹ *Pravda* (Moscow), June 16, 1983.

perception that it was under pressure from the Reagan Administration to modify its proposals more drastically or else face an American military buildup produced a steady stream of leadership pledges that the Soviet Union could not be intimidated into accepting arms control agreements it considered inequitable, but little that would suggest greater Soviet flexibility.

Still, notwithstanding the absence of major changes in Moscow's arms control stance in the post-Brezhnev period, the issue of controlling nuclear weaponry has remained the dominant one on the Soviet leadership's foreign policy agenda. Andropov's first major foreign policy initiative, a December 1982 INF proposal, indicated the high priority he would attach to disarmament issues. Moscow's major proposals since then have all dealt with arms control—whether of European nuclear forces, strategic arms, conventional arms in Central Europe, space-based weaponry, or chemical weapons. One looks in vain for evidence of similarly sustained activity in any other sphere of high foreign policy concern to Moscow. In the area of Sino-Soviet relations, for example, where some improvement in the atmosphere has occurred in the past two years, the Politburo showed no comparable signs of focusing on the problem; after expressing interest in improved relations with Beijing in November 1982, Andropov returned to this subject only once in 1983.²

Nowhere was the importance the regime attaches to arms control issues, particularly nuclear weapons in Europe, more obvious than in the high public profile of the General Secretary himself. Although Foreign Minister Andrey Gromyko was also prominent in arguing the Soviet case on INF to Western governments and to the Western public,³ Andropov repeatedly took personal charge of expounding and defending Soviet arms control initiatives. The long list of his pronouncements on such issues offered convincing evidence of their centrality to Andropov's foreign policy concerns. On the INF issue alone, he made highly publicized statements in every month of 1983 except for January, June, and December. He was also active in presenting the Soviet reaction to President Reagan's plans, announced in March of that year, for conducting research on ballistic missile defense systems. Even during Andropov's prolonged absence from public view, statements continued to be issued

in his name on arms limitation questions, to the neglect of nearly all other international issues.

Konstantin Chernenko, who succeeded Andropov as general secretary in February 1984, has had little opportunity as yet to take any initiatives on arms control. Nevertheless, his early statements suggest that he will maintain the traditional priority accorded to this area—and also the traditional Soviet caution.

INF Negotiations

If Andropov's highest foreign policy priority was arms control, its core was the limitation of Western INF systems in Europe. Soviet leaders have devoted much attention to this issue ever since 1979. In December of that year NATO approved a "dual-track" decision authorizing the United States to negotiate limitations on US and Soviet intermediate-range nuclear systems—while preparations were made for the deployment (beginning in late 1983) of 464 US ground-launched cruise missiles and 108 Pershing II ballistic missiles in five West European countries should these negotiations fail. The Kremlin, in preparing for and conducting those talks, was unstinting in its public efforts to justify its massive buildup of SS-20's—the fundamental cause of NATO's deployments—and to impugn American motives for matching those Soviet missiles.

Upon his accession, Andropov made prevention of NATO deployments his most important foreign policy goal. In pursuit of that goal, whether at the negotiating table or through West European resistance, already in December 1982 Andropov announced the first of a series of modifications in the Soviet INF posture. The Soviet position up until that time had been that the USSR and NATO should each limit the total number of intermediate-range nuclear missiles and aircraft in and near Europe to 300, and that no US missiles—only aircraft—be allowed in that figure. In a December 21 speech marking the 60th anniversary of the formation of the USSR, Andropov retained this basic framework but specified a sub-limit on missiles for each side, with the Soviets retaining only as many missiles as were in the combined British and French arsenals (162, according to Moscow's count).⁴ While previous authoritative Soviet statements, such as Brezhnev's November 1981 *Der Spiegel* interview,⁵ had likewise insisted that British and French nuclear

²Ibid., Nov. 23, 1982, and Aug. 27, 1983.

³Gromyko's most conspicuous roles in this regard were his journey to West Germany in January 1983; his press conference on April 2, 1983, in which he replied to President Reagan's proposals for an "interim" INF solution; and his October 1983 meeting with West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher. See text below for details.

⁴*Pravda*, Dec. 22, 1982. For a Soviet survey of the changes in Moscow's INF position, see *Izvestiya* (Moscow), Dec. 2, 1983.

⁵As published in *Pravda*, Nov. 3, 1981.

systems be somehow taken into account in any calculation of the INF balance, Andropov was the first to explicitly link Soviet missile deployment levels to those of Britain and France.

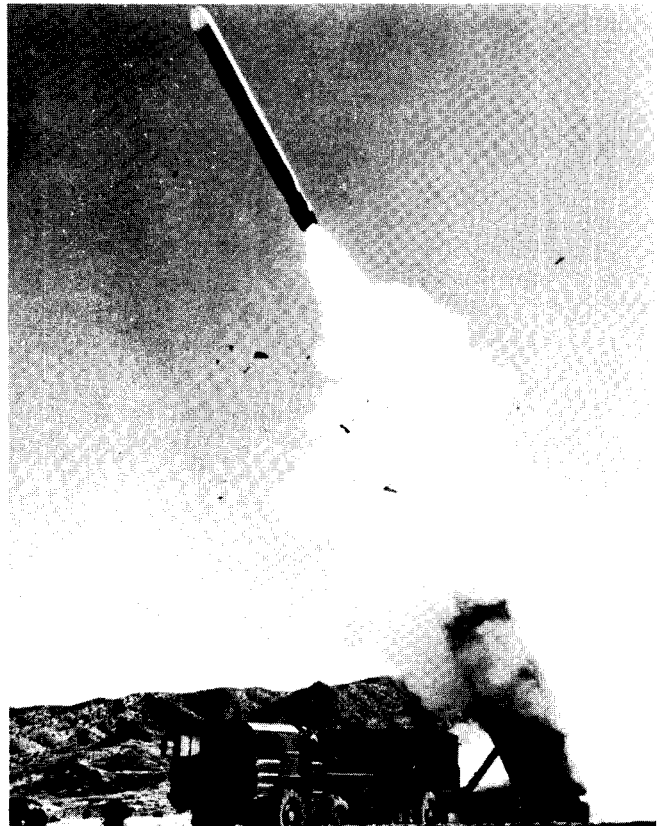
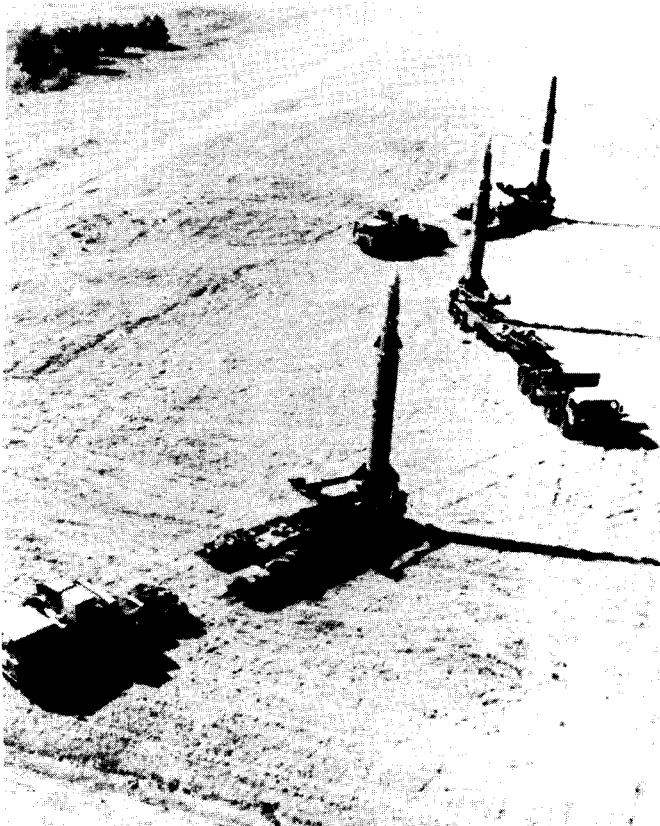
Moscow's insistence that the nuclear forces of those two US allies be figured in the balance and refusal to acquiesce in *any* deployment of US Pershing II or cruise missiles remained the immovable obstacles in the Soviet INF position, up to and beyond the collapse of the Geneva-based INF negotiations in November 1983. This position, tenaciously adhered to, blocked less rigid solutions that (for example) might have allowed a limited number of US cruise missiles in exchange for a specified number of Soviet SS-20 missiles. Andropov's explicit linkage on a one-for-one basis of Soviet and British-French intermediate-range nuclear missile forces made any compromise still more difficult. Brezhnev, by contrast, had left vague (in public remarks in 1981) just how British and French nuclear forces were to be regarded, saying only that "we simply propose taking into consideration what they have."⁶

Andropov tinkered with the Soviet proposal on three additional occasions before the talks collapsed. The first change came in May 1983, when he announced that the Soviet Union was willing to agree to equality in intermediate-range nuclear forces in Europe "with regard to both delivery vehicles and warheads."⁷ This modification was apparently made in an attempt to put to rest objections that SS-20 missiles with independently targetable warheads had far more destructive potential than the British and French missiles in question. The shift was a logical extension of Gromyko's remarks at a press conference in Moscow on April 2, 1983, describing warheads as a "more precise expression" than missile launchers of the power of nuclear weapons.⁸ But it also protected Soviet interests in the event that planned British and

⁶Ibid. The British and French have insisted that their nuclear forces are independent national forces, not part of NATO, and have repeatedly rejected any counting of these forces with those of the United States in calculating the nuclear balance.

⁷Ibid., May 4, 1983.

⁸Ibid., Apr. 3, 1983.



US intermediate-range nuclear missiles of the type being deployed in Western Europe as a result of the December 1979 NATO double-track decision: at left, three Pershing II missiles with transporters; at right, a test launch of a ground-launched cruise missile.

—US Department of Defense.

French missile modernization programs produced a significant increase in the number of warheads in their respective arsenals. Under an agreement equating Soviet warheads with the combined British and French warhead total, any increase by these two countries permitted an equal increase in Soviet deployments.

Andropov altered his original proposal a second time in late August 1983, in response to concerns in China, Japan, and NATO that Moscow intended to transfer to Asia any missiles it agreed to remove from Europe. From their new locations in Asia, SS-20's would not only threaten China, Japan, and US forces in that region, but they could also be readily returned to the European theater in a crisis. Andropov said the Soviet Union recognized the concern this created, and was therefore announcing its willingness to "liquidate" all Soviet missiles removed under the terms of an INF agreement.⁹ This pledge directly contradicted Gromyko's remarks at his April press conference that the American demand for the destruction rather than relocation of these missiles made an agreement impossible.¹⁰ Andropov's August modification indicated some sensitivity to the impact of Moscow's continued INF buildup in Asia on Sino-Soviet and Soviet-Japanese relations. It suggested what later became clear: that the Kremlin was willing to accept some as yet unspecified limitations on its Asian deployments in the interest of limiting NATO deployments in Europe.

Andropov's third modification, in late October, represented a further effort to publicize Soviet flexibility and thereby influence the debate in Western Europe—West Germany in particular—on whether or not to proceed with NATO missile deployments. With the crucial Bundestag debate over Pershing II missiles on German soil less than a month away, Andropov asserted that the Soviet Union, in pursuit of an agreement, was willing to take account of certain objections raised abroad. First, he offered to reduce the number of Soviet SS-20 missile launchers allowed in the European USSR to approximately 140, in order to reach alleged equality in missile *warheads* with the combined British and French forces. Second, he proposed to freeze the Soviet SS-20 missile force in Asia at the level existing when an INF agreement went into effect, and to maintain that level so long as there were no "substantial changes" in the strategic situation in Asia. Third, he signaled a willingness to display ill-defined "additional flexibility" on a Soviet demand to which Washington had long objected: restrictions on

US intermediate-range aircraft in or near Europe that were capable of fulfilling both a conventional and a nuclear role. He also expressed a willingness to "eliminate" the more than 200 SS-4 missiles that the Soviet Union still had in service if the United States renounced deployment of its new missiles in Europe, and thereby provided "an opportunity to continue" the INF talks.¹¹ But these modifications in the Soviet position proved to be too little and too late to affect Bonn's decision in favor of the new NATO missile deployments.

The threat of countermeasures in the event of those deployments was also an important part of Soviet strategy in 1983. Already in March of 1982, when Brezhnev announced a moratorium on additional SS-20 deployments in the European USSR, he warned that new NATO missiles would bring about retaliatory steps that would place US territory in an "analogous position" and end the Soviet moratorium.¹² Although Andropov did not repeat such threats during his initial months as general secretary, in May 1983 he began the process of defining more specifically what the oft-mentioned Soviet countermeasures would be, indicating that they would include deployments in the USSR, East Germany, and "other Warsaw Pact member states."¹³ In subsequent statements, the Soviet leadership (with help from East German leader Erich Honecker) specified that its military countermeasures in Europe would come primarily in East Germany and Czechoslovakia—threats probably designed to intensify the pressure on Bonn. Immediately after the breakdown of the INF talks in November, another Andropov statement confirmed that the Soviet Union would end its moratorium on new INF deployments in the European USSR, take measures to increase the nuclear threat to the United States in proportion to the increased threat to Soviet territory posed by the new NATO missiles in Europe, and accelerate preparatory work for siting "enhanced-range operational-tactical missiles" on East German and Czechoslovak territory. The Soviet press in January 1984 pointedly reported on the deployment of these missiles.¹⁴

Did the Kremlin seriously believe that an INF agreement with the Reagan Administration was possible during 1983? It is, of course, impossible to answer this question definitively. It is conceivable that in the early months of the Andropov regime there was some hope that the slightly less hostile atmosphere in US-Soviet

⁹Ibid., Aug. 27, 1983.

¹⁰Ibid., Apr. 3, 1983.

¹¹Ibid., Oct. 27, 1983.

¹²Ibid., Mar. 17, 1982.

¹³Ibid., May 4, 1983.

¹⁴Ibid., Nov. 25, 1983; *Krasnaya Zvezda* (Moscow), Jan. 18 and 19, 1984.

relations that seemed to follow Brezhnev's death could give birth to such an agreement. It is also conceivable that Moscow thought it could intensify pressures in Western Europe against NATO deployments to the point that Washington, fearing it would end up with nothing, would be forced into a compromise advantageous to the USSR. But these expectations, always tinged by doubts, must have dimmed drastically in the aftermath of the Korean Air Lines disaster in early September. In fact, Andropov's bitter statement at the end of that month seemed virtually to rule out any hope for an agreement: "If anyone has any illusions about the possibility of an evolution for the better in the present American administration's policy, recent events have dispelled them once and for all."¹⁵

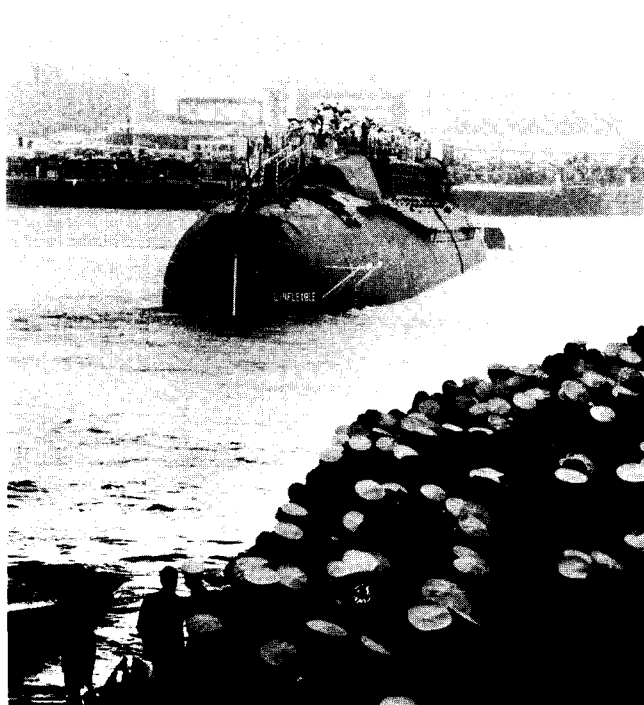
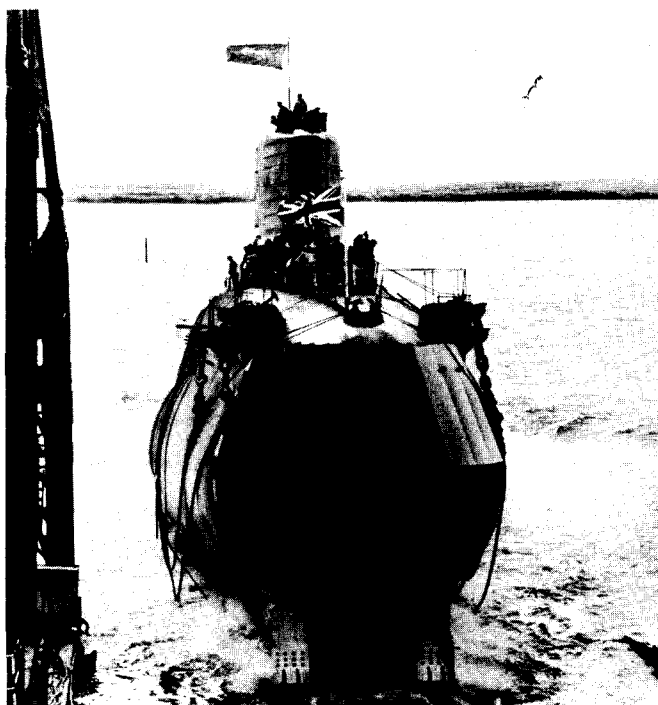
It is possible, nevertheless, that some Soviet officials clung to the hope that a compromise could be worked out even after the KAL incident. This may partly explain the byzantine behavior of chief Soviet INF negotiator Yuliy Kvitsinskiy, who even in November seems to have been frantically trying to maneuver the negotiations toward a settlement. In the aftermath of this unusual episode, Kvitsinskiy tried to impute to US negotiator Paul Nitze a proposal he had made pri-

vately to Nitze but that Moscow apparently was unwilling to accept.¹⁶

Indeed, the Kremlin's primary INF strategy seemed to be one of preventing deployments through public pressures, even while leaving open the possibility of a negotiated settlement. But there are a number of grounds for suspecting that stopping deployment was the more significant effort. First, the extent to which the Kremlin concentrated on presenting its negotiating posture in public suggests a lack of confidence in real progress at the talks. Historically, when Soviet authorities have sought to encourage serious negotiations (as in the talks resulting in the SALT agreements), the Soviet media have divulged relatively few details. Second, the pervasive pessimism in Soviet leadership statements and media commentary regarding the intentions of the Reagan Administration at least since the beginning of 1982 argues against the notion that the Politburo anticipated agreement in Geneva. *Izvestiya* newspaper commentator Aleksandr Bovin, widely reported to be a foreign policy adviser to the leadership, has personified that pessimism since mid-1982. At that time he began expressing the view,

¹⁵*Pravda*, Sept. 29, 1983.

¹⁶For each negotiator's description of this episode, see *The New York Times*, Jan. 12 and 19, 1984.



British and French strategic systems that Moscow has attempted to include in arms negotiations with the US: at left, Britain's first Polaris nuclear submarine, Resolution, at its 1966 launching; at right, the launching of French nuclear submarine L'Inflexible on June 23, 1982.

—Wide World and Daniel Simon/Gamma-Liaison.

which he continues to repeat, that no serious US-Soviet agreements can be expected so long as Reagan is in the White House.¹⁷

Finally, the concentration of Soviet effort on influencing West German deliberations suggests Moscow's greater concern to stop NATO missile deployments—by pressuring the Germans into refusing to accept the missiles—than to seek a compromise settlement with the United States. Gromyko began this effort in January 1983 during his visit to Bonn, warning that the Soviet Union, in assessing the consequences of new NATO missiles, could not ignore "the fact that the FRG is the only state where plans call for deploying Pershing II missiles capable of reaching in a few minutes strategic objectives deep inside the Soviet Union."¹⁸ He continued to apply pressure during his October meeting with West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher in Vienna and in the East German-Soviet communiqué that followed Gromyko's stop in East Berlin on his way home. The latter document ominously warned that the appearance of new US missiles on West German soil would "contradict the spirit and letter" of the treaties normalizing Bonn's relations with Moscow and with East Berlin.¹⁹

Andropov, too, participated in this effort in a somewhat more restrained fashion, raising the likelihood of complications for Soviet-West German relations both in his April 1983 *Der Spiegel* interview and in remarks made during Chancellor Helmut Kohl's visit to Moscow in July. On the latter occasion, Andropov told the West Germans that

Under the present state of affairs, the Soviet intermediate-range missiles in the European zone are merely a counterbalance to the intermediate-range nuclear systems of the NATO countries in that zone. They are not aimed against the West German armed forces. But if American missiles are deployed on West German soil, the situation will change. The military threat for West Germany will be multiplied many times over. Relations between our countries will also inevitably suffer certain complications. As for the Germans in

*the FRG and the GDR, they, as someone recently put it, would have to look at one another through thick palisades of missiles.*²⁰

Later, in the aftermath of the Soviet walkout from the INF talks, Moscow resolutely declared that only "readiness" on NATO's part to return to the situation that existed before the start of deployments could allow for the resumption of these talks.²¹

The post-Andropov leadership has shown no greater flexibility on this count. Moscow had long ago prepared the groundwork for a possible merger of the INF talks with negotiations on strategic arms by asserting that since US Pershing II and cruise missiles can reach Soviet territory, they are strategic missiles as far as the Soviet Union is concerned. Soviet officials have continued to insist on this point, asserting that they must take those missiles into account in calculating the strategic balance. But Moscow, both before and after Andropov's death, has left its future position on intermediate-range nuclear systems deliberately unclear—confining its policy statements to claims that only remedial actions by NATO can repair the situation and allow negotiations to resume.

START Talks

Despite numerous expressions of deep concern for the fate of the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) in Geneva, the Andropov leadership gave far less public attention to those talks than to the parallel ones on INF. It also showed less interest in openly modifying its position. The basic Soviet approach under Andropov—as in Brezhnev's last years—was cautious and attuned to justifying the current balance of US and Soviet strategic forces while seeking to discredit any and all US proposals.

It seems reasonable, nevertheless, to believe that the factors that led Moscow during the 1970's to seek the SALT I and SALT II agreements and to join the United States at the START talks in June 1982 have not lost their force. Rather, the relative immobility in the Soviet START position appeared to reflect Moscow's judgment that the INF issue had to play itself out first. That judgment, and a desire to promote the impression abroad that the Reagan Administration's policies were creating a dangerous breakdown in East-West dialogue and thereby increasing the threat of nuclear war, provide the most plausible explanations for Soviet refusal to set a date for resumption of the START talks after the last session in December 1983. An unmistakable desire to do nothing

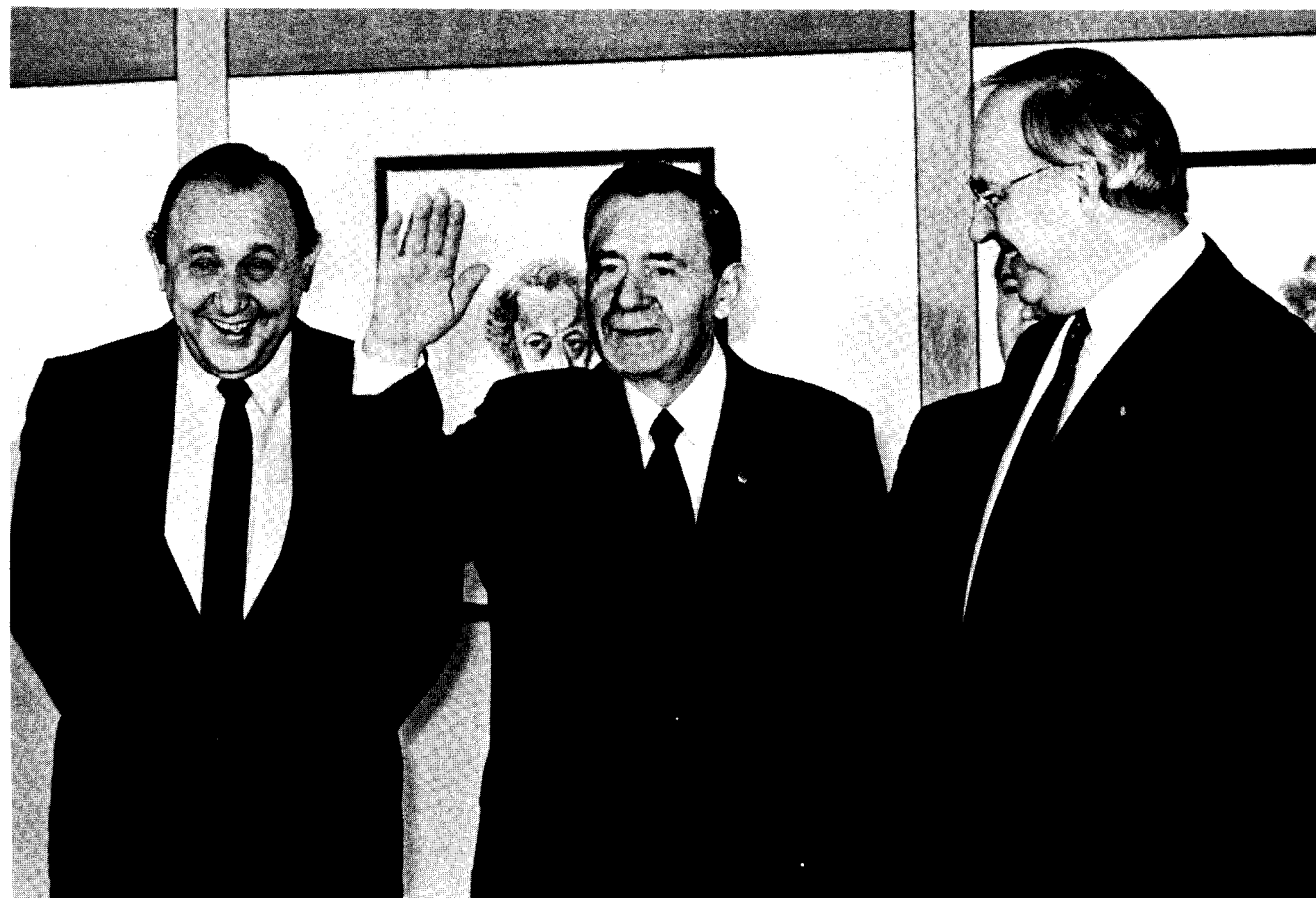
¹⁷*Izvestiya*, Aug. 6, 1982; Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report: Soviet Union* (Washington, DC—hereafter *FBIS-SOV*), Sept. 2, 1983, p. AA/7; Oct. 17, 1983, p. A/3; Dec. 6, 1983, p. A/3; and Mar. 5, 1984, p. CC/9.

¹⁸*Pravda*, Jan. 18, 1983.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, Oct. 19, 1983.

²⁰*Ibid.*, July 6, 1983.

²¹See *ibid.*, Nov. 25, 1983, for Andropov's statement to this effect. Chernenko has slightly reformulated the Soviet stance since becoming general secretary, insisting that only the removal of the "obstacles" to the INF and strategic nuclear weapons negotiations allegedly created by the deployment of the new US missiles in Europe will open the way to renewed talks. For Chernenko's varied expositions of the Soviet position, see *Pravda*, Mar. 3, Mar. 13, and Apr. 9, 1984.



Soviet Foreign Minister Andrey Gromyko (center) with West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl (right) and Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher (left) in January 1983 during a visit to Bonn in which Gromyko tried to pressure West Germany not to deploy Pershing II missiles on its territory.

—Regis Bossu/SYGMA.

that would promote the reelection of President Reagan—or support the hypothesis that Soviet leaders would be more pliable after NATO missile deployments than before—also contributed to Moscow's willingness to bear the onus for disrupting the talks.

A survey of Soviet statements on START illuminates the absence of major alterations in the Soviet public stance, despite modifications in the US position during 1983 that must interest Soviet officials. The original US position, as outlined by Reagan in May 1982,²² envisioned a first phase of major reductions in both US and Soviet ballistic missiles and warheads followed by a second phase dealing with other issues, including the introduction of equal limits on ballistic missile throw-weights. Although the Kremlin welcomed the opportunity to resume strategic arms negotiations with

the United States, it claimed to find little that was attractive in this proposal, alleging that it was “one-sided” and designed to unilaterally disarm the Soviet Union.²³

Andropov set the tone for continuing a stiff Soviet posture on START as early as December 1982, in his address commemorating the USSR's anniversary. He reiterated familiar Soviet objections to the initial US proposal and indicated no willingness to modify the Soviet position, but he did break Moscow's silence on the outlines of its own proposal. That proposal, he said, provided for reducing Soviet intercontinental arms by “more than 25 percent” and lowering “substantially” the number of nuclear warheads on each side. The American approach claimed to call for “radical reductions,” Andropov asserted, but in essence it envisioned a unilateral reduction of Soviet strategic

²²US Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Service, *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* (Washington, DC), May 17, 1982, pp. 599–604.

²³See Brezhnev's remarks in *Pravda*, May 19, 1982.

potential while leaving the United States free to build up its own strategic arsenal. Denying that the United States lagged behind the USSR in strategic arms and that a US buildup would make Moscow more flexible at the negotiating table, he contended that increases in US strategic programs would compel the Soviet Union to deploy "corresponding weapons systems of our own—an analogous missile to counter the MX missile and our own long-range cruise missile, which we are already testing, to counter the US long-range cruise missile."²⁴

Pravda, in an authoritative editorial article on January 2, 1983, further expanded on the details of the Soviet position at these talks and on Soviet objections to US proposals. The article noted that the USSR proposed a stage-by-stage reduction in the number of ICBM launchers, submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBM's), and heavy bombers down to a total of

1,800 units for each side by 1990, and an unspecified reduction in the number of nuclear warheads in each side's strategic arsenal to "equal agreed levels." Although *Pravda* did not specify the breakdown of this 1,800 figure, Western media have reported that the Soviet proposal as modified during 1983 allowed 1,080 multiple-warhead ICBM's and SLBM's, 600 single-warhead ballistic missiles and 120 strategic bombers equipped with cruise missiles.²⁵ *Pravda* also stated that the Soviet Union proposed prohibiting cruise missiles "of all types" with a range of 600 kilometers or more. The article objected in particular to the US-proposed division of the START discussions into two phases, the first of which would force the Soviet Union "to eliminate twice as many ballistic missiles as the United States" while leaving untouched the superior US strategic bomber force and US plans

²⁴Ibid., Dec. 22, 1982.

²⁵For a breakdown of Soviet figures, see Zbigniew Brzezinski, "Moving from Standoff to an Interim Accord," *The New York Times*, Jan. 29, 1984.



US President Ronald Reagan meets in September 1982 at the White House with his chief negotiators at three sets of arms talks with the USSR: at left, Paul Nitze (at the talks on Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces—INF); second from right, General Edward Rowny (Strategic Arms Reduction Talks—START); and at right, Richard Staar (Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction talks—MBFR).

—John Wicart.

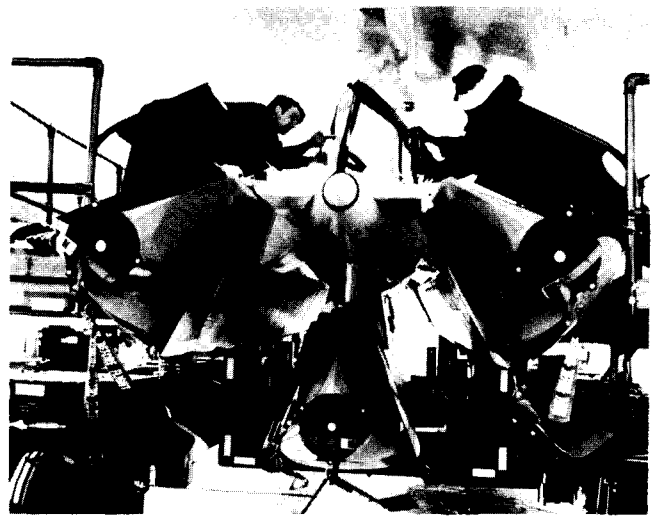
for a "massive deployment" of long-range cruise missiles.²⁶

Soviet leaders and media offered little further elucidation over the following year concerning any major modifications the Kremlin might be prepared to accept in a START settlement. Even after President Reagan's announcements on June 8 and October 4, 1983, that he had authorized several changes in the American START negotiating posture to meet Soviet complaints, Moscow showed little flexibility.

Reagan's announcements indicated that the United States was willing: (1) to raise the previously proposed ceiling of 850 on deployed ballistic missiles in line with the recommendations of the Scowcroft bipartisan advisory commission on strategic forces, which had suggested that the two powers replace large multi-warhead ICBM's with small, single-warhead missiles like the new Midgetman; (2) to remove the division between a first phase reducing ballistic missiles and a second phase limiting strategic bombers equipped with air-launched cruise missiles (ALCM's); and (3) to begin a mutual "build-down" process of selective reductions in the quantity of each side's armaments as they introduced new weapons systems. To further encourage Soviet bargaining, the President's October statement acknowledged that "there will have to be trade-offs" to gain the limitations on ICBM's desired by the United States and on bombers and ALCM's desired by the Soviet Union.²⁷

However intriguing these modifications might have been to Soviet leaders during periods of more productive negotiation, they responded only with words of condemnation to the revised US proposals. In a speech to the USSR Supreme Soviet on June 16, 1983, Gromyko delivered the Soviet public reply to Reagan's first announcement. The US modifications, he said, were "purely for show," sought "to deceive" the public, and kept unchanged the US effort "to disrupt the existing structure of the Soviet strategic potential" while leaving Washington free to build up its own armaments.²⁸

In October, Gromyko gave a similarly uncompromising treatment to President Reagan's second announcement of changes in the American position. In a speech in East Berlin on October 17, the Soviet foreign minister alleged that the "more flexible" approach proclaimed by the White House was "a propagandist's trick and nothing else." Moreover, the



Air-launched cruise missiles such as those being fitted here onto the wing of a B-52 bomber are a subject of Soviet arms limitation proposals.

—Boeing photo released to US Department of Defense.

build-down formula, he continued, "turns out to be only a fine-sounding cover for intensifying the nuclear arms race."²⁹ An authoritative *Pravda* article six days later also went out of its way to reject the notion that US willingness to combine discussion of ballistic missiles and bombers into a single phase represented a positive step.³⁰ Moreover, to emphasize that the Soviet perspective on the START talks had not softened in the wake of US missile deployments in Europe, *Pravda* in mid-January 1984 published another authoritative article basically repeating the Kremlin's complaints of the previous year and threatening a tougher Soviet negotiating position on strategic arms. NATO's new missiles, *Pravda* said, forced the "Soviet side to review its whole approach to the problem of limiting nuclear arms, including the START problem," because those missiles affected the strategic and not just the European balance. In addition, the party newspaper denied that there had been any progress at the talks, that there had been any change in the "essence" of the US position, that "build-down" in any way moderated the "one-sided" nature of the American approach, and that US talk of a "trade-off" represented any advance or reflected a genuine desire for compromise.³¹

²⁶*Ibid.*, Oct. 18, 1983.

²⁷*Ibid.*, Oct. 23, 1983.

³¹*Ibid.*, Jan. 16, 1984. Remarks made by a military member of the Soviet START delegation, Viktor Starodubov, to an American newspaperman (but not reported by Soviet media) explicitly warned that the new US missiles in Europe made invalid the Soviet offer at START to reduce its strategic arsenal by 25 percent. *The Washington Post*, Jan. 25, 1984.

²⁶*Pravda*, Jan. 2, 1983.

²⁷*Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents*, June 13, 1983, pp. 841-43, and Oct. 10, 1983, pp. 1387-88.

²⁸*Pravda*, June 17, 1983. See also the *Pravda* editorial article of July 16, 1983; and Andropov's remarks in *ibid.*, Sept. 29, 1983.

In a further indication of stalemate, Moscow's own public position on a strategic weapons accord developed at an extremely modest pace during 1983. In June the Soviet government proposed a quantitative and qualitative freeze on the world's nuclear arsenals, beginning with those of the United States and the USSR³²—a gesture that had mainly propaganda value, in view of the Reagan Administration's professed opposition to such a freeze. In more significant moves, Moscow dropped its demand that all cruise missiles be banned, agreeing "to allow the limited deployment of air-launched cruise missiles," and amended provisions of its proposal that would have prevented deployment of the new generation of American SLBM's.³³

What then can be expected regarding the future of the START talks? The immediate outlook is hardly promising. In the aftermath of its refusal last December to set a date for resuming these talks, Moscow carefully shielded its intentions about whether it might

even return to the table. In statements typical of Soviet reticence on the fate of the START talks, Andropov in his response in *Pravda* to President Reagan's January 16, 1984, speech on Soviet-US relations failed even to mention START, and Chernenko in his initial statements on arms control issues as general secretary touched on these negotiations only in passing.³⁴

The Kremlin's trouble in deciding how to proceed reflected some difficult choices. Its strategy of trying to convince the West Europeans that it had been and remained the reasonable party at the Geneva talks conflicted with its refusal to resume these talks. Its assertion that the military buildup of the Reagan Administration and the deployment of Pershing II and cruise missiles in Europe would not make the Soviet Union more compliant left it vulnerable to American efforts to portray a Soviet return to the table as a sign that the deployments—contrary to Soviet claims—had not adversely affected East-West relations, and that Western pressures might in fact contribute to eliciting a compromise from Moscow. Anxious not to contribute to

³²*Izvestiya*, June 17, 1983. Moscow had previously shown reluctance to endorse a qualitative freeze, expressing approval instead for the notion of "limiting" modernization to the utmost.

³³*Pravda*, Oct. 23, 1983; Edward Rowley, "Groundwork for Arms Progress," *The New York Times*, Feb. 2, 1984.

³⁴*Pravda*, Jan. 25, Mar. 3, and Apr. 9, 1984. Chernenko has appeared to link together the fate of the START and INF talks.



US Phantom F-4E aircraft on maneuvers over West Germany in late 1983. Limitation of both NATO and Warsaw Pact forces in Europe has been under discussion at the MBFR talks in Vienna since 1973.

—US Department of Defense.

President Reagan's reelection, Moscow also had to calculate the effects of its actions on the November 1984 US vote. If—as seems increasingly unlikely—Soviet START negotiators were sent back to the negotiating table soon, Moscow would still face the question of whether or not to somehow fold the INF negotiations into START, and thereby risk complicating the latter even further. In any case, the absence of major Soviet START initiatives, the persistent tension in US-Soviet relations, and the initial indications from the Chernenko regime hardly encourage expectations of dramatically new strategic arms proposals from the Soviet side.

MBFR Talks

The third major forum for East-West arms control dialogue, meeting in Vienna, deals with limiting the conventional forces of NATO and the Warsaw Pact facing each other in Central Europe. These complex multilateral negotiations have been underway since 1973 and involve 19 countries. They aim at an agreement reducing the combined ground and air forces of the two alliances (in West Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg, on the one side, and in East Germany, Poland, and Czechoslovakia, on the other) and implementing so-called "associated measures" that would verify compliance with those reductions and reduce the risks of misperception and miscalculation. The negotiations have been stalemated above all over the data question—how many troops does each side actually have in Central Europe—and over how troop levels can be verified. NATO contends that the Warsaw Pact has a considerably greater number of ground troops in Central Europe than does the West; the Warsaw Pact insists that approximate equality already exists.³⁵ Both sides have agreed on the desirability of reducing the combined ground and air force totals for each side to 900,000, but they have agreed on little else. Although the longevity of the talks testifies to the continuing importance of the issues discussed, these negotiations have long been outside the limelight. Soviet leaders have occasionally mentioned MBFR, but usually only in passing. The

lack of a sense of urgency has continued to characterize the post-Brezhnev approach.

Nevertheless, Moscow showed continuing interest in an MBFR agreement by presenting a new draft treaty at the talks in mid-1983, a draft that appears to remain the basis of the current Soviet position. According to surprisingly detailed Soviet media reports, that draft treaty (based on proposals submitted by the USSR delegation on February 17, but not formally presented until June 23) called for skipping over the nettlesome disagreement on the data question by simply reaching an understanding to reduce NATO and Warsaw Pact conventional forces in Central Europe over a three-year period to equal collective levels of 900,000 on each side, up to 700,000 of which could be ground forces. It proposed beginning the reductions by withdrawing 13,000 American and 20,000 Soviet servicemen with their armaments as a first step, and instituting a verification procedure providing for the invitation "on a voluntary basis" of observers from both sides to witness the withdrawals and armament reductions. After those steps were completed, three or four permanent posts would be permitted for the entry and exit of troops from Central Europe. In addition, under certain conditions—unspecified in Soviet accounts—on-site verification would be allowed. Finally, each side would be committed not to obstruct national technical means of verifying compliance with the agreement.³⁶

This draft treaty obviously contained elements that move in the direction desired by NATO, particularly on verification. These elements were welcomed by Western leaders, including President Reagan.³⁷ But neither of the two basic problems, data and verification, has shown any further sign of resolution. NATO continues to insist that the Eastern bloc has more troops than it admits, that any agreement must be based on agreed and verifiable data, and that the provisions for verification in the Warsaw Pact draft treaty are inadequate.³⁸

The Kremlin, for its part, has returned to the MBFR talks, but has shown neither enthusiasm nor signs of new flexibility. Andropov, in his January 1984 *Pravda* interview, indicated no inclination to modify the Warsaw Pact's position, noting only that the Soviet

³⁵See Jonathan Dean, "MBFR: From Apathy to Accord," *International Security* (Cambridge, MA), Spring 1983, pp. 116–39, for an excellent discussion of the development of the MBFR talks. For a summary of the Soviet view of the issues involved, see the USSR Ministry of Defense pamphlet, *Disarmament: Who's Against?* Moscow, Voenizdat, 1983, pp. 35–39. It provides the Warsaw Pact's figures for ground forces in Central Europe as of August 1, 1980, contending that the Eastern bloc had 796,700 soldiers vs. 792,500 for NATO. Its figures for the air forces were 182,300 for the Warsaw Pact and 198,500 for NATO.

³⁶Andropov reaffirmed Soviet support for the Warsaw Pact's 1983 draft treaty in his answers to questions from *Pravda* on Jan. 25, 1984, when he indirectly confirmed the USSR's willingness to resume the MBFR negotiations. As with the START talks, Soviet negotiators had refused to set a date for resumption of the MBFR talks at the end of the last round in December 1983. For details of the Warsaw Pact's draft MBFR treaty, see *Pravda*, Feb. 21 and June 24, 1983; and *FBIS-SOV*, Feb. 22, 1983, pp. AA/1–6.

³⁷*Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents*, Aug. 23, 1983, p. 1162.

³⁸*The Washington Post*, Jan. 23, 1984.



Soviet Col. Gen. Nikolay Chervov and Deputy Foreign Minister Viktor Komplektov at a Moscow press conference on February 18, 1983, where they publicized a new Soviet proposal relating to the Vienna MBFR talks.

—UPI

Union's proposals had "long" been on the table and offered a "quick approach to agreement, provided, of course, that there is a mutual striving to reach an accord."³⁹ The Western MBFR proposal presented in Vienna on April 19, 1984, has also met with a cool reception from the Soviet Union. The initial response from the Soviet delegation at the Vienna talks, as reported by *Pravda*, asserted that the new Western proposal failed to solve a "single one of the questions blocking progress" at the talks and, in particular, ignored the "key" question of a reduction in armaments.⁴⁰ Thus, the prospects for progress at these talks hardly seem glowing. These negotiations have dragged on for ten years for a reason: deep, almost irreconcilable differences in approach, whereby the West wants uncertainties eliminated and the East appears willing and perhaps even eager to allow a degree of uncertainty and imprecision.

Ballistic Missile Defense

One final area of major significance for Soviet arms control policy has emerged with renewed vigor over the past year. This area, which most directly impinges on the START negotiations, involves ballistic missile defense (BMD) and the use of space for military purposes. With its usual penchant for secrecy, Moscow

has disclosed nothing of its own plans for anti-satellite (ASAT) or BMD systems. The Soviet leadership has, however, reacted frequently and with vituperation to the American decision to investigate a comprehensive ballistic missile defense, which Moscow appears to believe will involve space-based components, and has treated that program as a serious long-term threat. This harsh reaction to a US initiative still years from realization suggests both a strong concern about the ultimate impact of these plans on the strategic balance and a perceived opportunity for scoring propaganda points.

As in the case of INF, Andropov took the lead in presenting the Soviet case against the US initiative on BMD and warning of the allegedly destabilizing effects of US plans for space. Suggesting the importance Moscow attaches to the BMD question, Andropov replied with unusual speed and directness to Reagan's March 23, 1983, speech announcing US plans in this area.⁴¹ Just four days later, in a *Pravda* interview, Andropov denounced the initiative as likely to fuel a "runaway" arms race and undermine the "entire process of limiting strategic arms." He contended that recognition of these dangers and of the "inseparable interconnection between strategic offensive and defensive weapons" had been the foundation of the 1972 anti-ballistic missile (ABM) treaty, in which both sides acknowledged that "only mutual restraint" in ballistic missile defenses would allow progress in limiting and reducing offensive weapons.⁴²

Andropov followed up this initial dramatization of the dangers implicit in American high-technology BMD plans with numerous other expressions of anxiety over the consequences for strategic stability. In April he used his interview with *Der Spiegel* to warn that these American plans were "planting a mine under the entire process of limiting strategic arms."⁴³ Two days later Andropov released a reply to a telegram from a group of prominent American proponents of banning weapons in space. In that reply he pledged "maximum effort" on the part of the Soviet Union to prevent the realization of "ominous plans for transferring the arms race into space."⁴⁴ In August Andropov returned to the BMD and ASAT issues during his final public appearance, a reception in Moscow for nine Democratic US senators.⁴⁵ Finally, in

³⁹*Pravda*, Jan. 25, 1984.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, Apr. 20, 1984.

⁴¹For Reagan's speech announcing plans for intensified research on BMD technologies, see *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents*, Mar. 28, 1983, pp. 442-48. For a report on a presidential directive issued in early 1984 that purportedly carries these plans forward, see *The Washington Post*, Jan. 26, 1984.

⁴²*Pravda*, Mar. 27, 1983.

⁴³As published in *ibid.*, Apr. 25, 1983.

⁴⁴*FBIS-SOV*, Apr. 27, 1983, p. AA/1; also *Pravda*, Apr. 29, 1983.

⁴⁵*Pravda*, Aug. 19, 1983.

Moscow's Line on Arms Control

his January 1984 interview with *Pravda*, he again warned that failure to prevent an arms race in space would confront mankind with a new threat of such dimensions that it "is even difficult to imagine now."⁴⁶

Other Soviet leaders have expressed similar sentiments both before and after Andropov's death. The most notable came from Defense Minister Dmitry Ustinov in a *Pravda* article last November, in which he turned his attention to space and BMD issues three times. Although other Soviet military spokesmen and media commentators had earlier explicitly alleged that President Reagan's initiative violated the 1972 ABM treaty, Ustinov was the first Politburo member to do so. The Defense Minister also charged that "this 'anti-missile decision' by R. Reagan is aimed at securing for the US militarists the ability to deliver a first nuclear strike against the Soviet Union with impunity."⁴⁷

The only clues the Kremlin has offered thus far about its future military response to the new US program have been of the most general kind. Andropov's

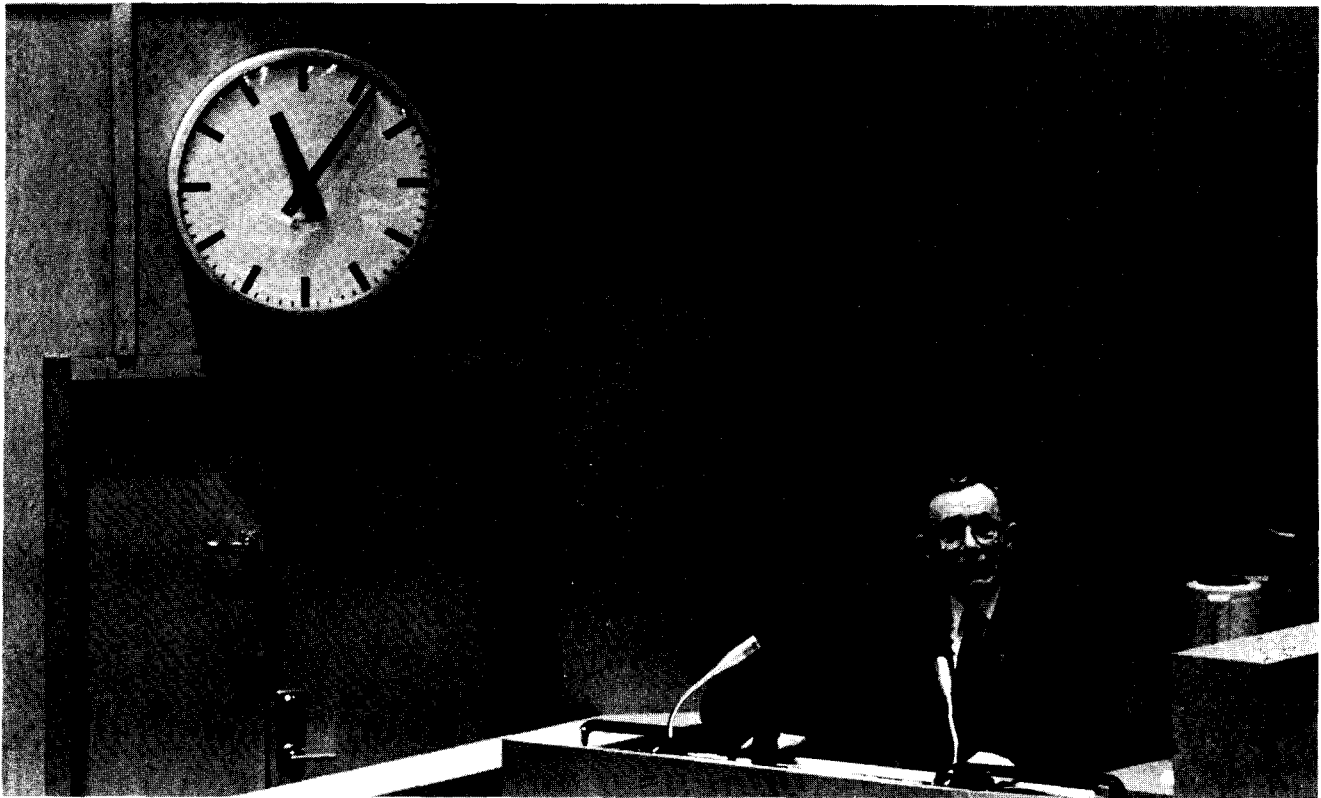
warning of a space arms race implies that the Soviet Union will be a major contender. Ustinov added his own vague threat, cautioning that if the United States failed to respond to Soviet appeals to ban space-based weapons, "then we will be unable to disregard US intentions to turn space into a war theater..."⁴⁸

Moscow's main overt response, however, has been a public campaign that appears primarily designed to discredit US plans and foster opposition abroad to the development and deployment of a large BMD system or other space weaponry. Obviously with Kremlin approval, Soviet scientists assumed an unusually prominent role in this campaign. In early April 1983, 243 scientists and public officials joined in issuing and publicizing a statement outlining the case against a comprehensive BMD. Pointing to the connection between offensive and defensive strategic weaponry, the statement, billed as an appeal to "scientists of the world," also explicitly and emphatically denied the technical feasibility of effectively defending against ballistic missile attack. In an assertion with equal rele-

⁴⁶Ibid., Jan. 25, 1984.

⁴⁷Ibid., Nov. 19, 1983.

⁴⁸Ibid., Apr. 25 and Nov. 19, 1983.



Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko addresses the Conference on Disarmament in Europe convened in Stockholm in January 1984.

—Chip Hires/Gamma-Liaison.

vance to both Soviet and US defense planners, the appeal claimed that there are "no effective defensive systems in nuclear war" and that the creation of such systems "is practically impossible."⁴⁹

Building on the expressed skepticism of the Soviet scientific community about both the feasibility and the consequences of a major BMD program, Andropov later in April made two proposals: (1) that Soviet and American scientists specializing on arms control issues "meet and discuss the possible consequences of creating a large-scale anti-ballistic missile defense system" and (2) that agreement be reached "on prohibiting altogether the use of force both in space and from space in respect to the earth."⁵⁰ He expanded further on these proposals at his August 1983 meeting with the US senators. Outlining the proposals later presented by the USSR to the United Nations, Andropov said the Soviet Union sought complete prohibition of "the testing and deployment" of any space-based weapons capable of striking targets "on earth, in the air, or in space." He also asserted that the Soviet Union was prepared to eliminate existing anti-satellite systems, to prohibit development of new ones, and to pledge not to be the first to put into outer space any type of ASAT weapons.⁵¹

Although the wide publicity that the Kremlin accorded these proposals suggests a propaganda motive, they may also have a serious side. Some members of the Soviet defense establishment, increasingly anxious about the possibility that the United States might gain a large technical advantage, may be pushing hard for a larger commitment to match the program announced by President Reagan. One Soviet scientist, Yevgeniy Velikhov, who has been most outspoken in denying that a defense against massive nuclear attack can be devised, acknowledged the pressures within the Soviet Union if the United States commits its resources to BMD development. In an interview with the *Los Angeles Times* last July, Velikhov, a vice president of the USSR Academy of Sciences and a prominent nuclear physicist, argued that however irrational from a military or economic point of view a "star wars" systems might be, "it's very difficult to resist if the United States spends half a trillion dollars for this crazy development." He explained that "our people will ask why the Americans, who are not stupid guys, are spending so much money on this business. They're going to say, 'We need to have

something against it.' " And even if 90 percent of the Soviet scientific community said it was completely senseless to match the United States, he added, the other 10 percent would win if "the Americans spend a trillion."⁵²

Other Arms Control Issues

Although the Soviet Union since Brezhnev's death has devoted the bulk of its attention on disarmament issues to the areas discussed above, other arms control issues have periodically been raised as well. The most important of these are the problem of verification of the various arms control agreements that have been proposed, an accord banning chemical weapons, and agreement on confidence-building measures.

On the issue of verification—crucial for any East-West arms control agreement—the Andropov regime was little inclined to go beyond its predecessor. Soviet leaders have for some time been aware of the great significance the United States and its allies attach to verification, and have sought both to grant the importance of this issue and to resist what the Soviets describe as unnecessary prying. Moscow's position on verification has ever so gradually evolved toward acknowledging the possibility of more intrusive methods, even while continuing to insist that national technical means are adequate for most verification tasks and that national sovereignty and legitimate state secrets should not be jeopardized.⁵³ This general Soviet approach has applied to all areas of arms control. Andropov maintained past Soviet practice in asserting (in April 1983) in sweeping terms that the Soviet Union was not opposed to verification and did not hinder agreements on that account. "Our policy on questions of verification," he said, "is a far-reaching one, right up to and including the establishment of general and complete verification when matters reach general and complete disarmament. We are against the turning of the problem of verification into a stumbling block at talks."⁵⁴

But whatever the Soviet position in theory, in practice the post-Brezhnev Politburo has been publicly unenthusiastic about accepting new, more intrusive verification methods. Only at the MBFR negotiations and on the question of on-site inspection of the de-

⁴⁹Ibid., Apr. 10, 1983.

⁵⁰Ibid., Apr. 25, 1983.

⁵¹Ibid., Aug. 19, 1983. For evidence that this remains the Soviet position, see Gromyko's remarks in *Sovetskaya Byelorussiya* (Minsk), Feb. 28, 1984.

⁵²The *Los Angeles Times*, July 24, 1983.

⁵³Two of the clearer presentations of the Soviet position on verification in recent years were made by Brezhnev in *Pravda*, Nov. 3, 1981, and by R. Zheleznev in "Monitoring Arms Limitation Measures," *International Affairs* (Moscow), No. 7, 1982, pp. 75-84.

⁵⁴*Pravda*, Apr. 25, 1983.

struction of chemical weapons has Moscow gone beyond its previous position. Moreover, the Kremlin's aide memoire to the State Department (published in *Izvestiya* on January 30, 1984) listing alleged US violations of disarmament agreements hardly suggests that Moscow will respond with a more flexible and understanding posture to widely-publicized US charges of Soviet violations of various arms control accords. In a similar vein, Gromyko, addressing the opening session in Stockholm of the Conference on Disarmament in Europe that same month, obliquely referred to Western demands for rigorous verification of various military confidence-building measures as attempts "to look for a crack in the fence to peep at one's neighbors."⁵⁵

On the question of chemical weapons, the Soviet Union has defined its public position in three proposals: (1) a draft treaty banning chemical weapons worldwide presented at the United Nations Special Session on Disarmament in June 1982, (2) a Warsaw Pact proposal submitted to the NATO countries in January 1984 concerning the elimination of chemical weapons in Europe, and (3) a proposal made in February 1984 to the 40-nation Disarmament Conference in Geneva indicating Moscow's willingness to allow continuous on-site inspection of the destruction of its acknowledged stockpile of chemical weapons.⁵⁶ Despite the Soviet movement toward the Western position, this last concession appears to have little chance of producing an agreement, since other key areas remain at issue—among them a major loophole in verification procedures. Under the Soviet plan each country participating in the agreement would still have to agree *voluntarily* to international inspection when suspected of possessing unacknowledged stockpiles or committing other violations of an agreement, including the ban on manufacture of chemical weapons. And although Chernenko, in his speech on March 2, 1984, declared that the "prerequisites" for a solution to this question "are beginning to ripen," the Soviet response to the new US chemical weapons proposal (presented by Vice President George Bush on April 18, 1984, in Geneva to the Disarmament Conference) has been implacably negative.⁵⁷

⁵⁵Chernenko less forcefully reaffirmed the impression of inflexibility on verification issues in his *Pravda* interview on April 9, contending that the United States "drags out" the question of verification "whenever it does not want an agreement."

⁵⁶*Izvestiya*, June 19, 1982, and Jan. 11, 1984; *Pravda*, Feb. 22, 1984; *The New York Times*, Feb. 22, 1984. The proposal for eliminating chemical weapons in Europe had been foreshadowed in the Warsaw Pact's "Political Declaration" of January 1983. *Pravda*, Jan. 7, 1983.

⁵⁷*Pravda*, Mar. 3, 1984. For examples of the Soviet assessment of the new US chemical weapons proposal, see *Pravda*, Apr. 21 and *Izvestiya*, Apr. 17 and 21, 1984. For Chernenko's recent remarks on banning chemical weapons, see *Pravda* Mar. 3 and Apr. 9, 1984.

On confidence-building measures, though Moscow has often expressed an interest in expanding the steps incorporated in the 1975 Helsinki agreement, its current posture leaves unclear how willing it is to address the specifics of this issue. At the Stockholm Conference on Disarmament in Europe in January 1984, Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko seemed more interested in pressing his case against US policies than in striving for mutually acceptable agreements. The proposals he presented on behalf of the USSR were in fact merely recycled Soviet and Warsaw Pact proposals: to outlaw the first use of both nuclear and conventional forces, to create zones free of nuclear weapons in "various parts" of Europe, to reduce military spending, and to expand procedures for prior notification of major ground, air, and naval exercises.⁵⁸ While Gromyko's approach to confidence-building measures was hardly forthcoming, these measures are one area where early progress toward agreement seems possible—if for no other reason than that any accords would be extremely narrow and would seem to be in the interest of all sides.

Conclusion

Given Soviet historical experience and the constraints on Soviet economic resources, there is little reason to doubt that Moscow's current leaders, like Brezhnev and Andropov before them, genuinely desire arms control agreements. The real question for the post-Andropov leadership is not whether to have arms accords but rather at what price. The unmistakable indications from the brief period of Andropov's reign are that the Kremlin feels the price asked by the current US Administration is too high, and that while adjustments have been made in US proposals, these have not altered what Moscow considers an attempt to force the Soviet Union into highly disadvantageous agreements.

Apparently convinced that under these circumstances it had less to gain by courting the White House than by appealing to opponents (and potential opponents) of current US defense and arms control policy, the Kremlin under Andropov steadily increased its wager on frustrating NATO missile deployments in Europe. It put its efforts into trying—both by persuasion and by intimidation—to convince the West Europeans that they should refuse these new missiles, and that the Reagan Administration was an unreasonable

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, Jan. 19, 1984. For an example of previous Soviet formulations on confidence-building measures, see Brezhnev's speech to the 26th CPSU Congress, in *ibid.*, Feb. 24, 1981.

negotiating partner bent on a fanatical crusade against Soviet communism. But Moscow's strategy has proven itself highly questionable at best; the initial Pershing II and cruise missiles are now in place. The Soviet leadership thus faces the need to reevaluate the fundamentals of its strategy.

How that strategy might change is far more difficult to predict than how it is likely to remain the same. It is most improbable, for example, that Moscow will concede one inch of its claim to parity with the United States, something in which Soviet citizens high and low appear to take some pride. Indeed, a Soviet perception that Washington is now disdainful of the Soviet claim to equality with the United States appears to be a significant irritant to Moscow's foreign policy establishment. The debate in Moscow is more likely to be about whether the approach to relations with Washington has been forceful, imaginative, or flexible enough. Naturally, these questions are not openly debated by the leadership, but there have been recurrent signs over the past year and a half that some differences exist among those in a position to offer advice to the Kremlin on the future of Soviet policy toward the United States. And policy toward the United States, especially in the present period of strained relations, amounts primarily to arms control policy.

Soviet commentators with current or past connections to the leadership (such as Fëdor Burlatskiy, Aleksandr Bovin, and Georgiy Arbatov) have all touched on the issue of whether the Reagan Administration represents the future or the past of America, implicitly raising the question of whether or not Moscow needs to revise its strategy. Although, predictably, they have justified the conclusion that Soviet détente policy has a long future, it is clear that they are confronting real doubts about the adequacy of current Soviet policy and genuine popular fears of nuclear war generated by the overblown rhetoric of Moscow's propaganda apparatus. In an article written in late 1982, Bovin acknowledged that a "skeptic" was "bound to ask" a whole series of questions that in effect cast doubt on the fundamental assumptions of Soviet policy: whether the Soviet Union was "overestimating" its strength, whether international security and cooperation could be expected in a world divided into two hostile camps, and whether "the Reagan phenomenon" was an accident.⁵⁹ More recently, Burlatskiy, in his capacity as political observer for *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, addressed a similar series of queries from Soviet readers, including one who asked whether "the present militarist course in the United

States is irreversible" and in place for "the foreseeable long-term future," and another who questioned the viability of peaceful coexistence itself.⁶⁰ How prevalent these doubts are among policymakers and what their potential is for bringing about changes in Soviet policy remain, of course, open questions.

What then does the future seem likely to bring in Soviet arms control policy? In the long term, it seems highly probable that Moscow's interest in avoiding nuclear war and engaging the United States in negotiations on major bilateral disarmament issues will bring the Soviets back to the negotiating table. Soviet leaders continue to express their unwavering commitment to negotiations on nuclear arms as a top priority, even as they insist that such talks must meet certain preconditions (for instance, that they be intended for "serious" rather than public relations purposes). Gromkyo, in his election speech in Minsk on February 27, 1984, for example, asserted that the Soviet Union has always believed that negotiations, including those on the reduction of nuclear weapons, are a "necessary and indispensable matter."⁶¹ Moreover, despite Moscow's unvarying assertions that it cannot be pressured into talks or into increased negotiating flexibility, the Kremlin has in recent years demonstrated that its willingness to engage in negotiations and to alter its arms control policy is indeed affected by Western defense plans.

Nowhere is this clearer than in the record of negotiations on INF. Initially, it was NATO's movement at the end of the 1970's toward deployment of Pershing II and cruise missiles in Europe that pushed Moscow toward the negotiating table. The Soviet Union had ignored the problem of European theater arms talks until November 1978, when, in response to mounting pressures in Western Europe for a NATO answer to the new Soviet SS-20's, Warsaw Pact leaders issued a declaration hinting vaguely at a willingness to talk about appropriate arms control arrangements.⁶² Later, Moscow's interest in INF talks quickened as NATO's December 1979 decision approached. In October of that year, Brezhnev announced Soviet readiness to reduce unilaterally the number of missiles in the western USSR if NATO would forgo new INF deployments. A month later he proposed that negotiations start "without delay."⁶³ And even though Brezhnev in January 1980 declared that NATO's two-track decision on INF had made talks "impossible," by the summer of that year the Kremlin had reversed field and proposed

⁵⁹*Izvestiya*, Nov. 5, 1982.

⁶⁰*Literaturnaya Gazeta* (Moscow), Jan. 4, 1984, p. 15.

⁶¹*Izvestiya*, Feb. 28, 1984.

⁶²*Pravda*, Nov. 24, 1978.

⁶³*Ibid.*, Oct. 7 and Nov. 6, 1979.

beginning negotiations on these nuclear systems.⁶⁴ The changes made by Andropov to the Soviet INF posture in 1983 also provide powerful support for the argument that Soviet policy is far from uninfluenced by Western defense plans. Thus, it is entirely conceivable that Soviet leaders at some time in the future will again see it in the interest of their country to return to the table and try to limit both strategic and intermediate-range nuclear weaponry.

The short-term outlook is both less certain and less promising. In general, early indications from the Chernenko-led Kremlin are that it continues to be ill-disposed toward any gestures that might break the ice in East-West relations. Although the leadership is leaving its options open for a return to negotiation, it is giving no encouragement to the idea that bilateral talks with Washington are about to be resumed, much less that a breakthrough may be imminent.

Of the major arms control issues, the least likely for near-term Soviet flexibility, judging by Soviet statements, is INF, followed closely by START, because it is on these talks that Moscow has most firmly staked out an uncompromising position. Also, as noted, the Kremlin is anxious to avoid having a resumption of negotiations on nuclear weaponry used to Reagan's political advantage. Gromkyo's late February speech in Minsk, for example, indicated great sensitivity to US electoral politics: "the candidate of the currently ruling Republican Party," according to the Soviet Foreign Minister, was concerned to attend to his foreign policy image lest Americans "vote for the other party's can-

didate"; and Moscow hoped the "pronouncements in favor of improving relations" coming from official Washington were "not the product of an election situation."⁶⁵

Altogether, then, the Soviet leadership's future strategy on arms control remains far from clear. The dim outlines that have appeared since Andropov's death suggest a strategy of patient reassertion of past policy while awaiting Western concessions or a changed political climate in the United States. Within that framework, the Kremlin is apparently seeking to exert what pressure it can on Washington through public criticism of US policy and improved Soviet relations with Washington's major West European allies. Chernenko's election speech in Moscow on March 2 did hint at a possible shift in the Soviet approach to progress in East-West arms control. The speech gave more than usual prominence to some of the less contentious arms control issues—such as nuclear test ban treaties, nuclear nonproliferation, and confidence-building measures. In so doing, Chernenko raised the faint possibility that Moscow might be moving toward a strategy of seeking to resolve lesser disarmament problems, as a step toward progress on the more significant and more difficult ones. But recent Soviet leadership statements, including those of the General Secretary, and Moscow's negative response to Western MBFR and chemical weapons proposals offer no reinforcement for a more flexible Soviet approach.

⁶⁴Ibid., Jan. 13 and July 5, 1980.

⁶⁵*Izvestiya*, Feb. 28, 1984.

Famine and Nationalism in Soviet Ukraine

By James E. Mace

After the harvest of 1932, millions of Ukrainians starved to death in one of the world's most fertile regions. The local population had produced enough food to feed itself, but the state had seized it, thereby creating a famine by an act of policy. The areas affected were demarcated by internal administrative borders in the Soviet Union, leaving immediately adjoining areas virtually untouched. Thus, the famine appears to have been geographically focused for political reasons. Since it coincided with far-reaching changes in Soviet nationality policy, and since the areas affected were inhabited by groups most resistant to the new policy, the famine seemed to represent a means used by Stalin to impose a "final solution" on the most pressing nationality problem in the Soviet Union. According to internationally accepted definitions, this constitutes an act of genocide.¹

Information About the Famine

Once an event of this magnitude fades from public consciousness, official efforts to deny that it had occurred are reinforced by a human tendency to disbelieve that such a thing could ever have happened. For this reason, it is necessary to sketch briefly what we know about the famine and how we know it.

The most obvious source for what happened is the memory of those who survived the famine. Eyewitnesses to any event of half a century ago become

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fewer in number with each passing year, but there are still hundreds, perhaps thousands, of them living in the West. A few managed to flee across the Prut River into Romania at the height of the famine, but most left the Soviet Union during World War II. Soon after the war, they formed organizations which published their testimony in their native Ukrainian or still imperfect English.² Others were interviewed as part of the Harvard University Refugee Interview Project.³ Still others published individual accounts. Most, of course, remained silent.

There are also individuals who may broadly be classified as perpetrators of the famine, and who have told their story in print. Lev Kopelev was a young communist who was sent into the Ukrainian countryside to procure grain in 1933, and he has written with regret about those whom in his youthful enthusiasm for the communist system he condemned to death by starvation.⁴ Victor Kravchenko, a Soviet trade official who defected at the end of the war, has also written about what he did and witnessed as a young Ukrainian com-

¹The United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, which the Soviet Union signed in 1954, defines genocide as "acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group as such" by the following means, among others:

- Killing members of the group.
 - Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group.
 - Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part.
- See Walter Laqueur and Barry Rubin, Eds., *The Human Rights Reader*, New York, New American Library, 1979, pp. 201-02.

²The largest collection of this type was published by DOBRUS, a Ukrainian acronym for the Democratic Association of Ukrainians Formerly Repressed by the Soviets, *The Black Deeds of the Kremlin: A White Book*, Toronto/Detroit, DOBRUS, 1955. Other sources of various types are analyzed in Dana Dalrymple, "The Soviet Famine of 1932-34," *Soviet Studies* (Glasgow), No. 3, 1964, pp. 250-84, and No. 4, 1965, pp. 471-74. The best bibliography is by Alexandra Pidhaina, "A Bibliography of the Great Famine in Ukraine, 1932-1933," *The New Review: A Journal of East European History* (Toronto), No. 4, 1973, pp. 32-68.

³The files of this project, which include transcripts of interviews with famine survivors, are housed at Harvard University.

⁴Lev Kopelev, *The Education of a True Believer*, New York, Harper and Row, 1980, pp. 224-86.