

Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session with Reporters on Production of the MX Missile (Excerpts)

December 10, 1982

Q. Mr. President, sir, you mentioned earlier that the MX vote was good news in the Kremlin. Do you accept the House Intelligence Committee report that proponents of the nuclear freeze are not being manipulated by Soviet agents?

The President. There have been several rather well-documented articles that have appeared in print with regard to, let us say then, participation in the peace move by”” the Soviets. We know that the originator-the originating organization of that was the World Peace Council, which is a Soviet organization supported by and maintained by them.

I can tell you that I have made inquiry on some of the articles that have appeared and asked for an analysis of whether they were factual or not, and the reports that I have received back, though, is that with here and there, an exception for journalistic exaggeration, they did check out.

I say again that the millions of people who are supportive of that movement, I’m sure, are sincere and well-intentioned and from that standpoint that we share the same goals. I think that a freeze would be just fine if we can get down first to equality between the two countries. But in this country today, we have less megatonnage, less force in our ballistic missile system, land-based system, than we had 20 years ago. And the Soviets, in the meantime, are now producing their fifth generation of missiles. They have improved in accuracy. They have improved in MIRV’ing, they’ve improved in the megatonnage. And all I’m saying is that one must look to see whether, well-intentioned though it may be, this movement might be carrying water that they’re not aware of for another purpose.

Incidentally, the first man who proposed the nuclear freeze was in February 21st, 1981, in Moscow-Leonid Brezhnev.