

Secretary Shultz

Realism and Responsibility: The U.S. Approach to Arms Control

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Following is an address by Secretary Shultz before the League of Women Voters, Detroit, Michigan, May 14, 1984.

No issue is of greater importance to the American people than the issue of war and peace. It is the gravest responsibility of any president, any administration, to defend the peace, so that our ideals of freedom and justice can thrive in an environment of security.

History has seen fit to bestow on our country a very special challenge. The moment when the United States took its place as a leader and permanent actor on the stage of international politics—at the end of the Second World War—coincided with the dawn of the nuclear age. From that point, there was no turning back. America could no longer attempt to isolate itself from world affairs—not when nations possessed the means to destroy each other on a scale unimagined in history.

But with the dawn of the nuclear age, there also came efforts—and with a special urgency—to limit or control this new weaponry. The United States led the way, proposing in the Baruch Plan of 1946 to eliminate nuclear weapons and place nuclear energy under an international authority. The plan was rejected by the Soviet leaders.

Today, this aspiration to banish the specter of nuclear war is shared by all civilized human beings. We are faced today with a basic truth: "A nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought." That's a quote from Ronald Reagan. Guided by this truth, the United States has been seeking to enhance its

national security not only by strengthening its defenses and its alliances but also—with equal vigor—by negotiating with the Soviet Union and other nations on the most ambitious arms control agenda in history.

I want to speak to you today about this Administration's approach to arms control. I'll begin with a realistic look at the role of arms control in our overall strategy for peace and security. Then I want to say something about the various negotiations on our agenda. Finally, I'd like to tell you what I see as the prerequisites for progress toward our arms control objectives.

ARMS CONTROL AS A DIMENSION OF INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

Preserving peace means more than avoiding catastrophe. As President Reagan has put it: "We must both defend freedom *and* preserve the peace. We must stand true to our principles and our friends while preventing a holocaust." There is no escape from this dual responsibility. We cannot conduct national security policy as if the special danger of nuclear weapons did not exist. But in our pursuit of peace and arms control, we must not abdicate our responsibility to defend our values in a world where free societies are the exception rather than the norm.

The intense rivalry today between East and West has been disciplined, in the nuclear age, by the specter of mutual destruction; but the rivalry has not ended. In any previous age, so funda-

mental a clash of national interests and moral perceptions might well have led to general war. In the nuclear age, this cannot be permitted, and both sides know it.

In light of that continuing rivalry, and the profound mistrust that it engenders, there are many skeptics who question the value of the arms control process. "Since we simply can't trust the Soviets to honor agreements," they say, "why bother to try to negotiate with them?" There are others who question our own commitment to the process, as though a strong defense and workable arms control agreements were mutually exclusive rather than mutually reinforcing objectives.

Well, we are committed to arms control, but that commitment is not based on naivete or wishful thinking. It is based on the conviction that, whatever the differences between us, the United States and the Soviet Union have a profound and overriding common interest in the avoidance of nuclear war and the survival of the human race. A responsible national security policy must include both strong deterrence and active pursuit of arms control to restrain competition and make the world safer. This is our policy.

The effort to control weapons, of course, is not a product of the nuclear age. History has seen many attempts to negotiate limits on numbers or characteristics of major armaments. The goals were—and are—worthy goals: to be able to shift resources to other, more productive uses, and to add a measure of restraint, predictability, and safety to a world of political rivalries. Before World War I, Britain and Germany negotiated

on ways of limiting naval construction. Between World Wars I and II, there were extensive multilateral negotiations to limit the building of capital ships, including a major naval disarmament agreement signed in Washington in 1922. The Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928 even attempted to ban war itself as an instrument of policy.

These efforts, we well know, failed to prevent war. There is a lesson here: the endeavor to control armaments does not operate in a vacuum. It is a dimension of international politics, and it cannot be divorced from its political context. Arms control cannot resolve the ideological and geopolitical conflicts that lead to competitive arming in the first place. By itself it cannot deliver security, or prevent war, and we should not impose on the fragile process of arms control burdens it cannot carry and expectations it cannot fulfill. While arms control agreements themselves can contribute to reducing tensions, basic stability must underlie political relations between the superpowers or else the process of arms control may not even survive. The SALT II [strategic arms limitation talks] Treaty, for example, which had many other difficulties, was withdrawn from Senate consideration at the request of President Carter after the controversy generated by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

Therefore, while we pursue arms control with great energy, we must bear in mind that progress depends on many factors beyond the substance of the proposals or the ingenuity of the negotiators. For arms control to succeed, we must also work to shape the conditions that make success possible: we must maintain the balance of power, we must ensure the cohesion of our alliances, and we must both recognize the legitimate security concerns of our adversaries and be realistic about their ambitions. On this secure foundation, we must seek to engage our adversaries in concrete efforts to resolve political problems.

COMPLEXITY OF ARMS CONTROL

Because of this clash of interests and values, arms control negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union are a difficult and laborious process and have always been so. Ever since nuclear arms control negotiations began in earnest some 20 years ago, the Soviets' perception of their military requirements, and their aversion to thorough measures of verification, have been significant obstacles to agreement.

No wonder, then, that all our arms control negotiations with them have been

protracted. The 1963 Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty was preceded by 8 years of negotiation and discussion. The 1968 Non-Proliferation Treaty took 4 years to negotiate. The SALT I accords of 1972 took almost 3 years of effort, and negotiations for the SALT II Treaty lasted nearly 7 years.

Even with good faith on both sides, there are differences of perspective—deriving from history, geography, strategic doctrine, alliance obligations, and comparative military advantage—which complicate the task of compromise. The Soviets have long had an advantage in larger, more powerful intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs); the United States took advantage of its technological superiority by developing missile-carrying submarines, smaller warheads, and a more broadly based deterrent. These asymmetries in force structure and capabilities are not merely of academic interest. It is enormously difficult to define equality, for example, between very different kinds of forces. The problem is compounded by other factors such as the extent of air defenses, civil defenses, and hardening of silos and of command and control, in which the two sides' forces also differ.

The task of arms control has been further complicated by a continuing revolution in technology. Many of our strategic assumptions have been made obsolete by technological changes in the past decades. Not only is there no "quick fix" in arms control but there is no "permanent fix" either.

Ceilings on numbers of strategic missile launchers may have been more meaningful in an era of single warheads. Now, in an age of heavy intercontinental missiles, each capable of carrying large numbers of accurate warheads, limits on missiles alone are no longer sufficient. Significant reductions in numbers of warheads, and Soviet movement away from reliance on heavy ICBMs, are needed for strategic stability. This is the essence of our proposal in the strategic arms reduction talks (or START), and it is also an important message of the bipartisan Scowcroft commission's report on the future of our strategic forces.

CURRENT U.S. GOALS IN ARMS CONTROL

Previous arms control agreements have limited only partial aspects of nuclear arsenals, permitting development and deployment to proceed in other areas. Both sides have pursued technological innovation and expansion in areas not covered or inadequately covered by agreements with the result that after

each new agreement there have been more nuclear weapons, not fewer. The experience of the past has now brought us to a more mature phase of the arms control process, in which we are compelled to tackle the real problems of nuclear stability more comprehensively and directly than ever before. At the same time, our efforts to control non-nuclear weapons are proceeding on all fronts.

Four Basic Objectives

In all our arms control efforts today, we are guided by four basic objectives: reductions, equality, stability, and verifiability.

Reductions. The agreements we seek should actually constrain the military capabilities of the parties by reducing weapons and forces substantially, not merely freezing them at existing or higher levels as most previous agreements have done.

Equality. These reductions should result in equal or equivalent levels of forces on both sides. An agreement that legitimizes an unequal balance of forces creates instability and may increase the risk of eventual conflict.

Stability. Arms control measures must genuinely enhance the stability of deterrence in crises. This means that after reductions, each side's retaliatory force should be secure enough to survive if the other side strikes first. Hence, under stable conditions, the temptation to fire first in a crisis or confrontation will be minimized.

Verifiability. Finally, arms control agreements must include provisions for effective verification of compliance by all parties. Experience has shown that agreements lacking such provisions become a source of tension and mistrust, rather than reinforcing the prospects for peace. The President's recent finding of Soviet violations or probable violations of a number of arms control obligations underlines that effective verification is essential.

Arms Control Agenda

With these objectives as our guideposts, the Reagan Administration has undertaken an unprecedented range of negotiations aimed at reducing the danger of war and building international confidence and security. In almost every case, the basic framework and concepts of these negotiations have been the result of Western initiatives, developed in close consultation among our allies and friends around the world.

START. Our proposals in the strategic arms reduction talks are designed to reduce the role in our respective arsenals of ballistic missiles, especially land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles. The Soviet Union today holds a threefold advantage over the United States in ICBM warheads. Excessive reliance on these weapons could increase the danger of triggering a nuclear exchange because the larger yields, higher accuracy, more rapid response time—and relative vulnerability—of these missiles make them simultaneously more vulnerable to a first strike and more capable of being used in a preemptive strike against elements of the other side's strategic deterrent.

Since we announced our first proposals in May 1982, we have made a serious effort to meet Soviet concerns and to reflect evolving strategic concepts such as those articulated by the Scowcroft commission. The core of our proposal is to reduce the total number of ballistic missile nuclear warheads by approximately one-third, leaving 5,000 on each side. As a way of dealing with the problem of differing force structures, we are willing to negotiate trade-offs with the Soviets between areas of differing interest and advantage. After consulting with key Members of Congress, we also incorporated the concept of "build-down" into our position. This proposal would link modernization of missiles to reductions in warheads and would make mandatory a minimum annual 5% reduction in ballistic missile warheads down to equal levels.

Throughout the negotiations in 1982 and 1983, however, the Soviets seemed determined to hang on to the great advantage in destructive power of their missiles. In fact, their proposals would have permitted them actually to continue increasing the number of their warheads. They also dismissed the concept of build-down. It is fair to say that there was some progress made over the five START negotiating sessions. In response to alterations in our original proposal, they offered some constructive changes in their position. With our introduction of the trade-offs concept, we seemed on the threshold of significant progress. But unfortunately, the Soviets tied progress in START to having their way in the intermediate-range nuclear forces (or INF) negotiations; last December they suspended indefinitely their participation in START in frustration over their inability to prevent the deployment in Western Europe of Pershing II and ground-launched cruise missiles.

INF. A Soviet walkout from the INF talks a month earlier also brought those talks to a halt, and the Soviets have so far refused to return without unaccept-

able preconditions. Since our objective in those talks was to eliminate that entire category of longer range INF missiles, we would have preferred not to have to deploy any such missiles of our own. President Reagan's initial proposal—and still our preferred outcome—was to cancel NATO's planned deployments of cruise and Pershing II missiles in exchange for complete elimination of Soviet SS-20 missiles. In an effort to break a year-long stalemate, we then put forward an interim proposal for substantial reductions in our planned deployments if Moscow would cut back to an equal number of warheads. Then, last September, we made further modifications in our proposal in order to meet stated Soviet concerns.

But, as in START, the Soviet objective was evidently to preserve the imbalance in their favor. In this case, the existing "imbalance" was a monopoly: more than 1,000 Soviet SS-20 warheads—with the number increasing steadily—versus none for the United States. The last idea they surfaced, just before breaking off the talks, was that each side reduce actual or planned deployments by an "equal number" of 572—still leaving 700 warheads in Europe and Asia for the U.S.S.R. and zero for the United States.

The Soviets' declared reason for withdrawing from both negotiations was that INF deployments had begun in Western Europe. But during the preceding 2 years, the Soviets had deployed over 100 SS-20s with more than 300 warheads; yet the United States continued to negotiate. In contrast to the Soviet buildup, NATO has been reducing the number of nuclear weapons in Europe. By the time our INF deployments are completed, at least five nuclear warheads will have been withdrawn from Europe for each U.S. missile deployed.

We are ready to resume negotiations—in both START and INF—at any time and without preconditions. Our proposals are fair, balanced, and workable. They remain on the table. The Soviets should need no new concessions to lure them back to Geneva. If they decide to return—and we hope they will—the Soviets will continue to find us and our allies serious and forthcoming negotiating partners.

Nonproliferation. President Reagan has also made it a fundamental objective to seek to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons to countries that do not now have them. We have a vigorous, twofold approach to the problem of proliferation. First, we seek to create and strengthen comprehensive safeguards on exports of nuclear technology. We are working to

strengthen the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and its safeguards system. At the same time, we strive to reduce the motivation for acquiring nuclear weapons by improving regional and global stability and by promoting understanding of the legitimate security concerns of other states.

These efforts have already contributed importantly to strengthening the global nonproliferation regime. One significant achievement is the clarification of China's nonproliferation policies during our negotiation of the nuclear energy cooperation agreement that was initiated during the President's trip to China. In January, China joined the International Atomic Energy Agency and said that it would thereafter require IAEA safeguards on its nuclear exports to states that do not possess nuclear weapons. Premier Zhao, in his January 10 statement at the White House, declared: "We do not engage in nuclear proliferation ourselves, nor do we help other countries develop nuclear weapons."

MBFR. Complementing our efforts to reduce the danger of nuclear confrontation, the Western allies have since 1973 been conducting talks with the Warsaw Pact nations on the mutual and balanced reduction of conventional forces in Europe. Our goal has been to reduce the conventional forces confronting each other there to a lower, equal level. Progress has been frustrated by the discrepancy between manpower figures provided by Eastern negotiators and Western estimates of actual manpower. Last month, along with the other NATO participants, we put forth a new initiative aimed at resolving this discrepancy and paving the way for verifiable reductions to parity. We hope that the Soviet Union and the other Warsaw Pact participants will seize this opportunity to break the impasse at Vienna.

Chemical Weapons. The problem of chemical weapons is now taking on a special urgency. Ever since these weapons were used—to horrible effect—in World War I, the world community has agreed upon and observed a code of legal restraint. Now after nearly 60 years, this code of restraint is in danger of breaking down. After exhaustive analysis, we have convincing evidence that the Soviet Union and its allies have been using chemical and toxin weapons against civilian populations in Afghanistan and Southeast Asia. More recently, mustard gas and other chemical agents have been employed in the Iran-Iraq war.

The United States has, therefore, taken the lead in efforts to strengthen existing agreements governing chemical weapons—and to seek the total elimina-

tion of those weapons. Just last month, Vice President Bush presented to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva a draft treaty for a comprehensive ban on their development, production, stockpiling, transfer, and use. Because of the easily concealable nature of chemical weapons, the draft treaty contains detailed provisions for verification, including systematic international onsite inspections. Because verification is frequently the most troublesome aspect of arms control negotiation, we are cautiously encouraged by recent signs of Soviet willingness to address some of the verification challenges. The world community must act effectively in banning chemical weapons, before existing restraints break down completely and the horrors of chemical warfare are once again loosed upon the world.

Confidence-Building Measures. In addition, there is a general category of confidence-building measures which we pursue in order to diminish the risk of war by surprise attack, accident, or miscalculation. Without fanfare, we and the Soviets have been holding a series of constructive meetings on upgrading the "hot line" direct communications link between Washington and Moscow. In the START and INF negotiations, the U.S. side tabled a set of proposals for prior notification of ballistic missile launches, prior notification of major military exercises, and expanded exchanges of data on military forces. In the Helsinki process, including the Stockholm Conference on Disarmament in Europe, the United States and the allies have pursued—and will continue to pursue—measures of this kind to reduce the risk of war. In addition, East and West are already routinely exchanging notifications of strategic exercises that might be misinterpreted. This practice should be expanded and more of it made mandatory.

Space Weapons. The United States has long believed that the arms competition should not be extended to space. For that reason, we have sponsored or joined several treaties advancing this objective. The 1963 Limited Test Ban Treaty banned, among other things, testing of nuclear weapons in outer space. That was followed in 1967 by the agreement on peaceful uses of outer space, which forbids placing any weapons of mass destruction in space. We are continuing to explore whether these restrictions should be strengthened, including the question of arms control for antisatellite weapons. A report of our initial findings was presented to the Congress in March. So far we have not been able to identify proposals to ban antisatellite weapons that would be adequately verifiable and

serve our overall goal of deterring conflicts. We are, however, continuing to try to identify measures that would ban or limit specific weapons systems, while meeting our verification concerns.

Let me mention, in this context, the question of space-based missile defenses. President Reagan has proposed a strategic defense initiative—a research program designed to explore the possibility that security and stability might be enhanced by a system that could intercept and destroy ballistic missiles before they reached our or our allies' territory. This research effort is fully consistent with all our treaty obligations. It could lead to an informed decision sometime in the next decade on the question of whether such defensive systems are genuinely feasible and practical. Shortly after the President announced the initiative last year, the Soviets proposed that scientists from the two countries meet to discuss the implications of these new technologies. We proposed, in turn, that experts of our two governments—including scientific experts—meeting in the context of appropriate arms control forums would be a more appropriate and effective vehicle for such discussion. We have recently renewed our offer, and it still stands.

Deterrence and Modernization

Even as we pursue these arms control goals, our first line of defense, as far into the future as we can see, will remain the deterrence provided by our armed forces. Thus the goals of stability and security we seek to advance through arms control can also be advanced by steps that we and our allies can take unilaterally.

Strengthening our conventional forces, for example, is a way of reducing our reliance on nuclear weapons and reducing the risk of any conflict that could escalate into nuclear war. Our strategic modernization program, of which the MX missile is a critical element, has been important to the maintenance of a strong deterrent and thus to the building of a solid foundation for progress in arms control. We can also modernize our own nuclear deterrent forces in ways that enhance stability, such as the development of a small, single-warhead ICBM that can lead both sides away from a trend, especially on the part of the Soviets, toward reliance on destabilizing multiwarhead ICBMs.

PREREQUISITES FOR PROGRESS

As I said earlier, success or failure in achieving our objectives depends on more

than the technical feasibility of the proposals or the skill of the negotiators. Our efforts to create a more secure and peaceful world cannot succeed unless certain important principles are upheld. These are prerequisites for progress in arms control.

First, we must maintain a credible deterrent, based on restoring a balance of military forces. If we allow the balance to deteriorate badly, we cannot expect our negotiators to restore it, no matter how skilled and determined they may be. Arms control will simply not survive in conditions of inequality, real or perceived; this is a fact of life proven by the experience of the 1970s.

Second, the unity of our alliances is both a prerequisite for success and a basic interest we will not sacrifice. This is why the unanimity displayed at the Williamsburg summit a year ago was so important. The Soviets seek to exploit arms control negotiations as a tactic to divide the West. They would like to establish a veto over NATO weapons deployments. They would like to maintain a monopoly of longer range INF missiles in order to achieve political dominance in Europe. These things we cannot and will not let them do. Thus, we have proceeded, and will continue to proceed, in the closest consultation with our allies and friends in both Europe and Asia.

Third, experience teaches that the arms control process cannot survive constant Soviet assaults on Western interests around the globe. The future of arms control, therefore, will depend in part on a Soviet willingness to help defuse tensions and regional conflicts, rather than exacerbate them. The problem is not only that these expansionist Soviet actions sour the atmosphere but that they run the risk of confrontations that can erupt into war. The increased stability we are trying to build into the superpower relationship through arms reduction is bound to be undermined when the Soviets are irresponsible in other regions of the world.

Fourth, stability can be enhanced by identifying and focusing on common interests shared by the two sides, rather than concentrating solely on what divides us. Although we will continue to pursue divergent political goals, we have come together in arms control forums in recognition of our common interest in reducing the risk of war and clarifying the ground rules of international conduct. Whether through major arms control agreements or confidence-building measures, we can give concrete expression to this common interest and make the world a safer place. Preventing nuclear proliferation is

another objective in which the United States and the Soviet Union have a common stake and is an area with considerable potential for greater cooperation. And, as an important bonus, the savings of world resources could be significant.

Ultimate success in our arms reduction efforts will depend on all these conditions: a credible deterrent, strong alliances, responsible international behavior by the Soviets, and a willingness to compromise in recognition of our overriding mutual interest in the survival of civilization. But these conditions, in turn, depend in the last analysis on the qualities that we as a nation bring to the enterprise: patience, perseverance, and national unity.

We Americans are sometimes an impatient people. It is a reflection of our traditional optimism, dynamism, and "can-do" spirit. Usually these qualities are a source of strength—but in a negotiation they can be a handicap. If one side seems too eager or desperate for an agreement, the other side has no reason to offer a compromise and every reason to hold back, waiting for the more eager side to yield first. It is paradoxical but true: standing firm is sometimes the prerequisite for moving forward.

Just as cohesion among the allies is crucial to the West's bargaining position in INF, MBFR, and all negotiations affecting our allies and friends, so unity in this country is critical to our hopes for progress in all these negotiations. If America appears divided, if the Soviets conclude that domestic political pressures will undercut our negotiating position, they will dig in their heels even deeper.

The constructive bipartisan spirit shown by the Congress in support of arms control and our strategic modernization programs is a model of what is needed. Those who have supported those programs deserve our gratitude; they have advanced the prospects for progress in arms control.

If the Soviet Union rejoins the negotiating process, and shows that it is willing to advance balanced proposals, I can tell you here and now that the United States is prepared to respond in a constructive spirit.

CONCLUSION

For all the difficulties, strategic arms control negotiations have been virtually continuous since the first SALT talks began in 1969. The dialogue has continued between the Soviet Union and the United States even in times of tension and through major changes of leadership on both sides. The Soviets have temporarily brought part of this dialogue to a halt, but some discussions are continuing. We stand ready, with reasonable proposals, to go forward with all these negotiations in a spirit of give-and-take.

All American Presidents since the dawn of the nuclear age have committed themselves to the effort to reduce the dangers of war. They have all taken, in essence, the same path: maintaining our military strength, working with our allies, and negotiating with the Soviet Union. Ronald Reagan follows in this tradition. No President can be oblivious to what is at stake. We have learned many

valuable lessons from the arms control efforts of the past. We are realistic, and we are tackling the toughest issues boldly, comprehensively, and without illusions. No President has been more willing to face up to the real challenge of peace and security than Ronald Reagan.

Let the national debate, therefore, be conducted at a level of serious, constructive dialogue worthy of the momentous importance of the subject. At stake is the future of all of us, and on this issue we are not Republicans or Democrats but Americans. If the President, the Congress, and the nation work together, we will be a formidable force for the reduction of both armaments and the danger of war, for the defense of freedom, and for the preservation of peace.

The problems are too urgent and the dangers too great to put off searching for solutions until we and the Soviets have resolved all of our political differences. By defending our values, while emphasizing the common interests of ourselves and our adversaries, I believe we can find a way to reduce the dangers. Then, as President Reagan has said, "we can pass on to our posterity the gift of peace; that, and freedom, are the greatest gifts that one generation can bequeath to another." ■

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