

## INF draft treaty: Don't revive Reykjavik!

by Konstantin George

On Saturday, Feb. 28, Soviet television carried a policy statement by General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachov, who announced that the Soviet Union was prepared to sign an agreement, "independent of other issues," with the United States, for the mutual removal of all intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) in Europe and the European part of the U.S.S.R.. Such an agreement, a strategic disaster for the NATO alliance, was actually reached during the October 1986 Reykjavik pre-summit.

At the time of the Reykjavik pre-summit, we were lucky. Only rigid Soviet insistence then, that an INF accord had to be linked to a "package," including U.S. abandonment of plans for serious testing and deployment of the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), saved us from a Reykjavik "Munich." Moscow's temporary obstinance prevented President Reagan, who had arrived in Reykjavik prepared to sign a "zero option" INF agreement to remove all Pershing II and cruise missiles from Europe, from selling out our European allies by signing such an accord.

The "near miss" of Reagan's capitulation at Reykjavik precipitated the so-called Irangate crisis. "Irangate" is only symbolic for the power struggle raging in the United States, over which factional grouping shall control government policy. The day before Gorbachov spoke, White House Chief of Staff Don Regan, one of the key architects, if not the key architect of the planned Reykjavik sell-out, was fired.

Moscow's perception of, and response to, the transformed factional situation in Washington, was instantaneous. Gorbachov's offer of a separate INF agreement marks a de-

cision taken by the Soviet Politburo and military high command that now is the last opportunity—a chance, not a certainty—that an INF agreement can be signed under a Reagan presidency.

Key phrases in the Gorbachov Feb. 28 statement reveal the Soviet intention of intervening into the U.S. power struggle, to attempt to buttress the weakened position of the U.S. liberal East Coast elite. The Soviet general secretary declared, for example: "We were assured repeatedly that, if the U.S.S.R. removed the question of the medium-range missiles from the package, it would not be difficult to reach an agreement on their liquidation. Now there exists a good opportunity to prove this through deeds."

This was an open call to the liberal, anti-Weinberger faction of the Reagan administration to "prove through deeds" that they can get President Reagan to agree. On this point, the strategic decoupling faction has prevailed. But, there are many weeks and months of political earthquakes ahead in Washington, which will erupt and rumble around the Reagan presidency. No one can now predict that Reagan will be in position to actually sign and deliver on the sell out that he has agreed to.

### The points of the Gorbachov offer

The word "sell-out" is not an exaggeration. The INF agreement proposed by Gorbachov at Reykjavik, and again on Feb. 28, and endorsed by Reagan at Reykjavik, and in his March 3 White House televised address, contains the following points, which we cite from Gorbachov's address:

1) All "medium range missiles," meaning the Soviet SS-20s stationed in the European U.S.S.R.; the U.S. Pershing II missiles stationed in West Germany, and U.S. ground cruise missiles, stationed in West Germany, Great Britain, Italy, and Belgium, would be removed. This means in fact that the entire U.S. nuclear missile arsenal based in Western Europe, capable of hitting the Soviet Union, would be gone, and gone forever.

On the Soviet side, the hundreds of short- and medium-range nuclear missiles, with a range up to 1,000 km, namely the SS-21 (120 km, or 70-mile range); the SS-23 (500-km, or 325-mile range); the SS-22 (1,000 km, or 625 mile range), the Soviet missiles actually slated for destroying European targets in a war, would remain fully intact.

2) The Soviet Union would retain 100 SS-20 warheads in Siberia and the Soviet Far East. The SS-20 is multi-purpose missile. It can carry either three warheads, giving it intermediate range (5,000 km), or one warhead, with intercontinental range (8,000 km). Therefore, the figure "100 warheads" can mean 33, or 100 SS-20 launchers. The United States would be allowed 100 intermediate-range warheads on U.S. soil, meaning Alaska, for the Pacific theater.

3) The first two points correspond to the original Reykjavik formula. Gorbachov added, as a contentless "sweetener," a third point. He pledged that Soviet "short-range missiles of greater length" would be removed from East Germany and Czechoslovakia. Much has been made of this alleged Soviet "concession" to "placate European fears" concerning the Soviet short-range missile threat, to cite typical phrases appearing in the German press over the past few days. Let's ignore the atmospheric and look at Gorbachov's carefully formulated wording in this portion of the resolution.

Gorbachov pledged to remove *only* "operative-tactical [short and medium range, up to 1,000 km] missiles of greater range." This means, as a White House background briefing of March 3 stressed, that only the 1,000 km range SS-22s would be removed from the German Democratic Republic (G.D.R.) and Czechoslovakia (C.S.S.R.). Note also that the verb employed by Gorbachov was "remove," not "scrap." Gorbachov has not given away one iota of Russian military advantage. The SS-23s and SS-21s that are to remain forward-based in the G.D.R. and the C.S.S.R. are sufficient to totally blanket and take out all necessary targets in West Germany, the Low Countries, Denmark, and Northern France, should it come to war. If necessary, the "removed" SS-22 units, with their intact launchers, crews, and missiles, could be back in forward deployment within 48 hours of receiving such an order.

4) Gorbachov pledged that once an INF agreement is signed, then talks could begin on reducing European theater short-range missiles. This is a pure propaganda stunt, again "offering" something contentless to "sweeten" the West's surrender.

No one in Washington should be deluded into believing that Reagan's insistence on "strict verification" will place any obstacle in the path of the agreement. Such wishful thinkers should carefully read the text of Soviet Chief of the General Staff, Marshal Sergei Akhromeyev's March 2 Moscow press conference, where he added three crucial points to Gorbachov's proposal, two of them explicitly designed to ease the path to early ratification. Akhromeyev said the accord must be verified through "on-site inspection" (why wouldn't Moscow wish to be certain that the U.S. nuclear arsenal were removed from Europe?) and that French and British nuclear forces are specifically exempt from the negotiations. The third point was that Moscow would make no reductions in Soviet conventional forces, a condition which Reagan is not insisting on, in any case.

### The response from Western Europe

European government reactions to Gorbachov's offer run the gamut from acceptance (above all in West Germany), to a combination of interest and caution (Great Britain), to outright rejection (France).

From France, the denunciations of a "zero option" deal are across the board. At the top, Socialist President François Mitterrand and conservative Premier Jacques Chirac both denounced the offer as unacceptable. On March 3, French Defense Minister André Giraud, while on a visit to Djibouti (former French Somaliland) on the Horn of Africa, expressed his "severe worry" over any such deal, adding that an INF agreement would: "remove all American missiles in the West [of Europe], which are capable of reaching Soviet territory, while removing only a small part of the Warsaw Pact missiles, which are capable of hitting Western Europe." French Foreign Minister Jean-Bernard Raimond, commented in Paris, that a "zero option" agreement would create "very grave problems for the military balance in Europe." The solid all-party (except naturally, the Communist Party) unity in opposing Gorbachov, was further demonstrated when former Socialist Defense Minister Charles Henru, also attacked the Soviet "offer."

Britain's response has been lukewarm. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher did refer to Gorbachov's offer as a "step forward," but cautiously withheld any official endorsement. The British press has been openly linking the timing of Gorbachov's move with the intense factional situation inside Washington. Some quotes from the March 5 *Daily Telegraph* are most enlightening on this subject:

U.S. "officials claim, not very convincingly, that there is no evidence Mr. Gorbachov made his proposals in the context of Mr. Reagan's Irangate difficulties," and, "analysts suggested that Mr. Reagan will be looking for the glittering political prize of an arms treaty while negotiating from a desperately weakened position because of the Irangate scandal."

The response of the German government to the Gorbachov offer can be called nothing short of alarming. Bonn, led by its liberal foreign minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, has wholeheartedly endorsed Gorbachov's proposal. The latest expression of this endorsement came in a March 4, Ash Wednesday speech (Ash Wednesday political speeches are an annual ritual in West Germany) by Genscher, in the Lower Bavarian town of Bayerbach. Genscher called Gorbachov's proposal, "the Zero Option we always wanted. . . . The [West German] Federal government must campaign energetically for it, so that this goal is reached." Genscher called for the United States to conduct negotiations "leading to success," so that a treaty can be signed "during Reagan's presidency."

Genscher, in his Ash Wednesday speech, also let a post INF agreement cat out of the bag, in the following passage, which began with a call to support "Gorbachov's policy of openness": "That this policy is successful lies in our own interest as well. Every step taken, which helps overcome the East-West partition, is also a step toward overcoming the partition of Germany."

This is the not-so-behind-the-scenes secret governing the politics of most of the West German elite today. The German elite, faced with the prospect of the Pershing II and cruise missiles being withdrawn, and with the prospects of large-scale U.S. troop withdrawals (U.S. troop withdrawals being "taken for granted" was openly stated by Chancellor Helmut Kohl's national security adviser, Horst Teltschik, in an interview with the *Stuttgarter Zeitung*, Feb. 24), are in a frame of mind best characterized by the words hysterical and fatalistic.

Under these conditions, the tendency toward decoupling, and putting out feelers to Moscow on the question of a strategic accommodation with Russia, incorporating some form of "reunification" or "confederation" on the German Question, has been growing. One of the key German elite figures involved in the feelers on the German Question, West German President Richard von Weizsäcker, has been invited by Soviet ambassador Yuli Kvitsinski to Moscow, and will be going sometime this spring.

In the context of the feverish U.S.-Soviet negotiations to conclude an INF deal, before, from Moscow's standpoint, the Washington factional situation goes out of control, von Weizsäcker's pilgrimage to Moscow will be but one of many in the near future. The show starts on March 16-17, when U.S. Undersecretary of State Michael Armacost arrives for talks on "settling regional conflicts" and paving the way for a visit by Secretary of State George Shultz. At the end of March, British Prime Minister Thatcher will arrive for lengthy talks with Gorbachov. Thatcher will be followed in April by Shultz. Shultz, in his talks with Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, will include in the agenda planning for a Reagan-Gorbachov Summit in the autumn, to ratify the "zero option" 1987 agreement. Gorbachov will certainly be available for such an occasion. Will Reagan be available for Munich II?

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## Interview: John Erickson

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# Russification, lies, Soviet strategic aims

*On March 5, University of Edinburgh Defense Studies Prof. John Erickson made a number of on-the-record comments and evaluations, in a discussion with Mark Burdman of EIR. We print excerpts from the discussion with Professor Erickson, who had returned a few days earlier from a visit to the Soviet Union, for discussions with Soviet government officials, academicians, and others. Erickson, a widely read expert on Soviet military strategy, is the coordinator of the "Edinburgh Conversations," which brings British spokesmen regularly into contact with their Soviet counterparts.*

**Q:** What can you tell us about the reaction or evaluation in Britain, to the arms proposals made by Gorbachov?

**A:** I think, from the government side, the attitude is one of extreme caution—and skepticism. The Gorbachov proposal has many implications for British government policy. There is a feeling of "let us see." There is a difference, you must understand, between the government and the population.

**Q:** The *Daily Telegraph* of March 3 cites comments of yours, on coming back from Moscow, that one must wonder whether what the Soviets are doing is really *perestroika* ("restructuring"), or *peredyshka* ("buying time"). What can you say on this?

**A:** Well, what I said was somewhat misprinted, although it really doesn't matter. The point is, I quite heatedly and agitatedly debated this question last week with Soviets I talked to. Is this all a great big strategic deception? Or is it for real? They were very upset when I brought it up, but I said I had every intention of doing so, and I told them, "You must answer this."

**Q:** You and colleagues in the past have stressed the importance of *maskirovka*, or camouflage, in Soviet planning. Ogarkov was formerly a coordinator of *maskirovka* operations, and there are others. What can you say about *maskirovka*, in the context of what you have just said?

**A:** It is tied to the question of joint ventures. Very recently, the Soviets have begun talking about joint ventures. But they haven't gotten the legal underpinnings for this! I said to them, "You'd better get your act together."