

## CASE STUDY SERIES

# The Presidential Nuclear Initiatives of 1991–1992

Susan J. Koch



**Center for the Study of Weapons of Mass Destruction**

National Defense University

DR. JOHN F. REICHART

Director

DR. W. SETH CARUS

Deputy Director, Distinguished Research Fellow

Since its inception in 1994, the Center for the Study of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD Center) has been at the forefront of research on the implications of weapons of mass destruction for U.S. security. Originally focusing on threats to the military, the WMD Center now also applies its expertise and body of research to the challenges of homeland security. The center's mandate includes research, education, and outreach. Research focuses on understanding the security challenges posed by WMD and on fashioning effective responses thereto. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff has designated the center as the focal point for WMD education in the joint professional military education system. Education programs, including its courses on countering WMD and consequence management, enhance awareness in the next generation of military and civilian leaders of the WMD threat as it relates to defense and homeland security policy, programs, technology, and operations. As a part of its broad outreach efforts, the WMD Center hosts annual symposia on key issues bringing together leaders and experts from the government and private sectors. Visit the center online at [www.ndu.edu/WMDCenter/](http://www.ndu.edu/WMDCenter/).

**Cover:** President George H.W. Bush announces the Presidential Nuclear Initiative in a televised address to the Nation on September 27, 1991.

Photo courtesy of the George Bush Presidential Library





**The Presidential Nuclear Initiatives of  
1991–1992**



# The Presidential Nuclear Initiatives of 1991–1992

by Susan J. Koch

*Center for the Study of Weapons of Mass Destruction  
Case Study 5*

Case Study Series General Editor: Paul I. Bernstein



National Defense University Press  
Washington, D.C.  
September 2012

Opinions, conclusions, and recommendations expressed or implied within are solely those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Defense Department or any other agency of the Federal Government. Cleared for public release; distribution unlimited.

Portions of this work may be quoted or reprinted without permission, provided that a standard source credit line is included. NDU Press would appreciate a courtesy copy of reprints or reviews.

First printing, September 2012

NDU Press publications are sold by the U.S. Government Printing Office. For ordering information, call (202) 512-1800 or write to the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. For the U.S. Government On-Line Bookstore go to: [www.access.gpo.gov/su\\_docs/sale.html](http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/sale.html).

For current publications of the Institute for National Strategic Studies, consult the National Defense University Web site at: [www.ndu.edu](http://www.ndu.edu).



# Contents

Introduction .....	1
The Context.....	2
A Determined President .....	3
A Willing National Security Team.....	5
Crafting the Package .....	7
The September 27 Announcement .....	10
The Soviet Response.....	14
The Path to PNI II .....	17
PNI II .....	18
The Russian Response .....	19
Conclusion .....	21
Appendix A. Text of Presidential Nuclear Initiative Announcements ...	23
Appendix B. Summary of Presidential Nuclear Initiatives.....	40
Bibliography .....	47
Notes .....	51
About the Author.....	57



## Introduction<sup>1</sup>

On the morning of September 28, 1991, then-Colonel Frank Klotz witnessed an historic moment at Grand Forks Air Force Base, North Dakota. As he and other senior officers from the base bomber and missile units watched, the crews for the B-1 strategic bombers that had been on alert that day climbed into their cockpits, started the planes, and taxied one after another away from the alert aircraft parking area.<sup>2</sup> That scene was repeated at all 11 Strategic Air Command (SAC) bases in the United States. By the end of the day, there were no U.S. bombers on alert for the first time in over 30 years.

Although the numbers varied over time, a significant portion of U.S. strategic bombers had been on continuous alert since 1957: fully fueled, loaded with weapons, with crews in a special nearby area—ready to launch in a few minutes. On September 28, 1991, Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney signed an Execute Order to end that practice immediately.<sup>3</sup> It has never resumed.

The termination of strategic bomber alerts was only one of many major changes to U.S. nuclear forces and practices that President George H.W. Bush announced to the Nation in a prime-time television address on September 27, 1991. Known as the Presidential Nuclear Initiatives (PNIs), the measures were described as unilateral/reciprocal. That is, the United States intended to act on its own, but also challenged the Soviet Union to take comparable steps. President Bush declared additional PNI actions in his State of the Union address on January 28, 1992. The Soviet and Russian responses came in dedicated television addresses by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev on October 5, 1991, and Russian President Boris Yeltsin on January 29, 1992.<sup>4</sup>

President Bush's first PNI announcement was unprecedented on several levels. First, in its scope and scale; it instituted deeper reductions in a wider range of nuclear weapons systems than had ever been done before. Second, the PNIs were primarily unilateral—not to be negotiated, but instead implemented immediately. While Soviet/Russian reciprocity was encouraged, it was not required for most of the U.S. measures. Third, the decisions announced on September 27, 1991, were prepared with a speed and secrecy that had never been seen before in arms reduction, and have yet to be duplicated. The PNIs were developed in just 3 weeks and involved very few people. In contrast, most arms control measures, before and after the PNIs, required months and often years of interagency and international debate and negotiation by scores of military and civilian officials.

Why did this happen, and how was it possible? This case study discusses the general context in which the PNIs were developed, the concerns and goals that motivated them, and the national and international processes that led to them. The focus is on the initial announcement

by President Bush, because it was the pathbreaker. The three subsequent declarations by the Soviet Union, United States, and Russia are also addressed, but in less detail.

### **The Context**

Although the specific PNI decision process took less than a month, the context began to emerge nearly 2 years before, with the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989. That momentous event marked the beginning of the end of the Warsaw Pact, of the Soviet threat to Western Europe, and eventually of the Soviet Union itself. Six months after the Wall fell, President Bush announced significant changes to planned tactical nuclear forces in Europe—cancelling the Follow-On to Lance short-range, ground-launched missile, as well as modernization of nuclear artillery warheads deployed in Europe. At the same time, he called for a North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Summit in summer 1990 “to launch a wide-ranging NATO strategy review for the transformed Europe of the 1990’s.”<sup>5</sup> The result was the “Declaration on a Transformed North Atlantic Alliance,” issued by the NATO Summit in London on July 6, 1990. The London Declaration went beyond President Bush’s May 1990 statement by calling for the elimination of short-range nuclear artillery in Europe. Still, that would apply to just a portion of tactical nuclear weapons and occur only pursuant to a U.S.-Soviet arms control agreement.<sup>6</sup> Slightly over a year later, the PNI went much further.

On the strategic forces side, Secretary Cheney had directed in November 1989 a comprehensive review of the Single Integrated Operational Plan (SIOP), the U.S. nuclear war plan—or more accurately, series of plans reflecting a range of nuclear strike options. The SIOP Review was completed in April 1991, in the same time period as the dramatic changes in Europe. Concluding that the United States had far more strategic nuclear weapons than required for robust deterrence of the Soviet Union, the SIOP Review gave the President and his defense advisors confidence that they could reduce nuclear forces significantly without military risk. The Review made clear that U.S. security interests would be well protected under the Strategic Arms Reduction (START) Treaty, signed by Presidents Bush and Gorbachev on July 31, 1991—and under even greater reductions.<sup>7</sup> The Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, signed in 1987, was the first U.S.-Soviet nuclear arms control agreement to provide for real reductions and intrusive on-site verification. In fact, it eliminated an entire class of weapons. The START Treaty did not eliminate any weapons classes or types, but it did provide for real reductions and intrusive verification. START reduced accountable strategic warheads to 6,000 and deployed strategic nuclear delivery vehicles to 1,600 on each side.

Meanwhile, change within the Soviet Union and Central Europe was accelerating. The Warsaw Pact effectively ceased to function after the fall of the Berlin Wall, and finally dissolved

officially on March 31, 1991. Ukraine and the Baltic States pressed ever more strongly for independence from the Soviet Union. On June 12, 1991, Boris Yeltsin was elected President of the Russian Republic, in the first democratic election in Russian history.

Beginning in January 1991, Gorbachev oversaw the preparation of a so-called New Union Treaty, in an effort to salvage the Soviet Union by reorganizing it into a confederation. Eight republics were to sign the Treaty on August 20, 1991. But that signing was cancelled after a hard-line group instituted a coup against Gorbachev on August 19. The plotters could not accept even a weakening of the Soviet structure, let alone its dissolution. Their efforts collapsed quickly, ending on August 21. Yeltsin's courageous opposition to the coup went far to ensure its failure, and greatly raised his national and international standing. The huge changes in the political relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union are shown in the transcripts of President Bush's telephone conversations with Yeltsin on August 20, and with Gorbachev on August 21. The President clearly viewed Yeltsin as a leader along with Gorbachev, and stressed his desire to move forward with the relationship after the failure of the coup.<sup>8</sup> The stage for the PNIs was set.

## A Determined President

All those involved in the initial U.S. PNI decision process who were interviewed for this case study agreed that President Bush was the driving force. One official remarked that, in decades of public service, he had observed no comparable case in which a President led the way for such sweeping, decisive actions in the military sphere.<sup>9</sup> In the words of then-National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft:

*The President wanted to take the initiative in arms control. . . . I'm clear up to September 1991, and the dramatic move on tactical nuclear weapons, together with a strategic arms control proposal. Those were all done, basically, in the White House, by a President who wanted to stay out in front, and who saw intuitively that there was a new world forming, and didn't want to be behind the power curve and be driven either by the Congress and the budget, or by the Pentagon's resistance.<sup>10</sup>*

Several different, but complementary, factors motivated the President and other principal players to pursue the PNI. First, they reportedly had been seriously concerned about the reliability of Soviet nuclear command and control during the failed coup attempt against Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev in August 1991. That concern remained after Gorbachev's

reinstatement, given the obvious weakness and questionable future of the Soviet center, and led directly to one little-noticed element of the PNI, on nuclear command, control, and security.<sup>11</sup> Perhaps even more important was the specter of nuclear weapons in Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan; by September 1991, it was clear that each was poised to become independent in the very near future, in the process inheriting the Soviet nuclear warheads and delivery vehicles on their territories.

Further, President Bush saw dramatic nuclear reductions as both reflecting and accelerating the changed relationship with the Soviet Union. If there was to be any chance of reciprocity, those reductions had to be decided upon quickly, while there were still known Soviet and Russian leaders in Gorbachev and Yeltsin. The START negotiations, completed in July 1991, had lasted for almost a decade. President Bush appeared to see a repeat of long, drawn-out negotiations as unnecessary and, indeed, counterproductive, in view of both the new U.S.-Soviet relationship and the uncertainties about the future of the Soviet Union and its leaders.<sup>12</sup>

Although they differ on some details, all senior participants who have written about the genesis of the PNI agree that it was directed by President Bush at a National Security Council (NSC) meeting on September 5, 1991.<sup>13</sup> President Bush and Scowcroft have reported that they discussed possible tactical and strategic nuclear arms reductions over the Labor Day weekend in Kennebunkport, Maine, the Bush family summer home. The initial ideas for tactical reductions came from Scowcroft, but were immediately adopted and pressed by the President.<sup>14</sup> Three days after Labor Day, the President chaired the NSC meeting to discuss future strategy toward the Soviet Union in the wake of the failed coup against Gorbachev and in light of the very real possibility that the Soviet Union could break up in the near term. Then-Deputy National Security Advisor Robert Gates describes the discussion:

*The President finally moved to the real agenda—how to respond to the dramatic events of the preceding two weeks. He had resolved late in August, after the coup attempt, to propose a whole new series of initiatives to reduce arms further. He had run into doubts from Cheney about going further at this point. Now, in this meeting, he asked if there was anything we could do militarily to save money and to signal that we recognized there was a new world out there. The President concluded by urging a “dramatic statement” of initiatives that would give the United States the offense in global perceptions of the changes under way. An intensive effort to develop such initiatives culminated three weeks later in a presidential address to the nation.<sup>15</sup>*

## A Willing National Security Team

The concept of making significant changes to the Nation's tactical nuclear capabilities was not a new one inside the Department of Defense (DOD). Ideas for doing so had been circulating for some time, especially among senior military officers. Still, it is questionable if such changes would have come to anything without Presidential leadership. At a minimum, it seems clear that Presidential direction was critical to the scope and scale of the initiative, and the speed and decisiveness with which it came to fruition. It became evident to all involved in shaping the initiative that “No” was not an option because of the President's clear intent.

It helped, of course, that senior DOD leaders, both uniformed and civilian, either shared the President's vision or were at least willing to accept the changes desired by the Commander in Chief. Many senior Navy officers hoped for an end to all naval nuclear weapons except for submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs). One key participant has argued that the Navy saw nuclear weapons on surface ships as an obstacle to its freedom of movement, a barrier to their being—and being seen as—globally dominant.<sup>16</sup> The presence of nuclear weapons on board complicated and constrained port visits, and entailed procedural requirements that commanders viewed as onerous and out of proportion to the weapons' value. Another former official has noted concerns that deployment of nuclear-armed Tomahawk land-attack cruise missiles (TLAM-N) on the decks of surface ships could be vulnerable to terrorist attack.<sup>17</sup>

As for ground-launched weapons, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell had long favored a major reduction in the Army's nuclear mission. In the spring of 1991, Powell raised with Cheney a proposal to eliminate “small, artillery-fired nukes because they were trouble-prone, expensive to modernize, and irrelevant in the present world of highly accurate conventional weapons.” At the time, the four Service Chiefs, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Paul Wolfowitz, and Secretary Cheney all opposed the idea.<sup>18</sup> By September, the time had come for those proposals to be revived and even expanded.

National Security Advisor Scowcroft was, if anything, even more interested than was President Bush in arms reductions without agreements. That interest had been well demonstrated in 1989, when President Bush and Scowcroft successfully pressed both within the U.S. Government and in NATO to propose dramatic cuts in U.S. and Soviet conventional forces in Europe.<sup>19</sup> Further, Scowcroft saw in September 1991 an opportunity

*to solve a number of tactical nuclear weapons questions at the same time. In Europe, for example, the unification of Germany rendered short-range nuclear weapons undesirable, since they would detonate on German territory. . . . In*

*connection with its efforts to engage North Korea, South Korea was suggesting the removal of the US nuclear weapons located there. We did not wish to make such a move solely in Korea, concerned that the North might take our actions as the beginning of a US withdrawal. The Navy's problem was different. A number of countries were reluctant to allow our warships carrying nuclear weapons into their ports. . . . In addition, these were no longer the preferred weapon against submarines. The sum of all these issues led me to suggest that we unilaterally declare we were getting rid of all tactical nuclear weapons (except air-delivered ones).<sup>20</sup>*

The views of Chairman Powell and Navy leaders on tactical nuclear weapons were strengthened substantially by the seismic strategic changes of 1989–1991. First were the end of the Cold War and the progressive diminution of the Soviet threat. Second was the emergence of new zones and forms of conflict—highlighted by Operation *Desert Storm* in 1991 against Iraq—in which U.S. conventional military force would have primary, and growing, importance. Further, advances in conventional weaponry led the U.S. military to conclude that conventional forces could now accomplish many missions that earlier required nuclear weapons. As a result of those changes, many military leaders came to view both ground- and sea-launched tactical nuclear weapons as impediments to conventional superiority and military dominance, rather than as assets.

The Secretary of Defense and his staff were less eager than the military leadership to reduce dramatically—still less to eliminate—ground- and sea-launched tactical nuclear weapons. Unlike the military, they considered forward deployment of those weapons to be essential for extended deterrence and allied reassurance. However, they also recognized growing pressures to reduce tactical nuclear weaponry. U.S. ground-launched nuclear forces in NATO required modernization to enhance their safety, reliability, and effectiveness. The NATO Allies were increasingly resistant, and had begun discussing withdrawal of those forces after the fall of the Warsaw Pact.<sup>21</sup> Those changing Allied views led directly to President Bush's May 1990 decision to cancel Follow-On to Lance and nuclear artillery warhead modernization, and to the July 1990 NATO Summit call for a negotiated elimination of short-range nuclear artillery in Europe.

Political and budgetary realities also were important factors behind several strategic force elements of the September 1991 PNI. There was much public discussion at the time of a “peace dividend.” Earlier in September 1991, the U.S. Senate had voted against funding the mobile versions of the Peacekeeper intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) and Small ICBM as well as the advanced Short-Range Attack Missile (SRAM II). On September 27, the President an-



nounced the cancellation of all three programs (as well as cancellation of the theater-delivered version of the SRAM-II).<sup>22</sup> At the September 28 press conference to explain the PNI details, Secretary Cheney stressed that those actions would not entail significant savings in the short term, but would do so in the long run. He estimated life-cycle savings for the three cancelled programs at \$20.2 billion.<sup>23</sup>

Retaining strategic bombers on continuous alert appeared unnecessary and too expensive with the diminution of the Soviet threat. Moreover, ending the practice could send a positive message to the Soviet Union about U.S. hopes for a changed relationship. Deactivating Minuteman II ICBMs would not save any money in and of itself, but would send a positive political message at no military cost. The Minuteman II force was scheduled to be eliminated under the START Treaty signed in July 1991; accelerating that process once START was ratified would save funds over the longer term.

### **Crafting the Package**

The process leading to the first PNI announcement was very closely held. The specific measures were developed by a small number of military and civilian officials in the Department of Defense, endorsed by the four military Service Chiefs, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Secretary of Defense, and approved by the President. Arms control staff in the State Department and the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA) were not involved in preparing the package. Experts from the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) were asked for data on Soviet nuclear forces, but were not told the reason for the request or included in the decision process.<sup>24</sup>

Immediately after the NSC meeting on September 5, 1991, Chairman Powell tasked the Director of the Joint Staff, Lieutenant General Henry Vicellio, USAF, to prepare a list of possible unilateral measures to meet the President's guidance. Vicellio turned to then-Brigadier General Gary Curtin, USAF, who had been the Joint Chiefs of Staff representative to the START negotiations until July 1991 and was now Deputy Director for International Negotiations, Joint Staff J5 (Strategic Plans and Policy). Curtin convened a meeting with his military Service counterparts on the morning of September 6. The military Service representatives initially advocated a fairly traditional arms control approach to the task, wanting to retain U.S. options for future trades with the Soviet Union. However, Curtin conveyed that Chairman Powell wanted options for the Joint Chiefs and Secretary Cheney to implement immediately. The group was directed to formulate realistic and forward-leaning options for immediate consideration by the Joint Chiefs.<sup>25</sup>

The Curtin group then developed a wide-ranging, ambitious package in just a few days. There was little discussion of motives or goals; instead the group was simply ordered to devise proposals. As Major General Curtin has described it, development of the PNI was a “bizarre process” for those accustomed to traditional arms control negotiations.<sup>26</sup>

Another departure from normal arms control policy practice concerned the interaction—or more accurately, the absence of interaction—between the military and civilian staffs in DOD. Under standard procedures, the Joint Staff would have coordinated its proposals with Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) Policy offices. For the PNI, however, the Curtin group proposals went directly to Chairman Powell through the Director, Joint Staff J5, Major General Ed Leland, USA, and Lieutenant General Vicellio, without discussion with OSD staff. The Curtin group was surprised when Powell endorsed all its recommendations.<sup>27</sup>

It appears that Chairman Powell then took the package to Secretary Cheney. In turn, Cheney sent it to the OSD Policy staff for its review. Only a few OSD officials were involved. The main players were Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Policy Stephen Hadley, his Principal Deputy J.D. Crouch, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Nuclear Forces and Arms Control Policy Frank Miller, and Director of the Strategic Forces Policy Office Gil Klinger.<sup>28</sup> Within a few days this group presented its recommendations to Secretary Cheney.

In general, the OSD staff supported the Joint Staff package, but with some significant differences. They concurred with the removal from deployment of all ground and naval tactical nuclear weapons. However, they proposed to keep in storage a significant portion of both types of weapons, allowing for their redeployment, if required. Secretary Cheney staked a middle ground on this question in the proposal he presented to the President.<sup>29</sup> On September 27, President Bush announced that all U.S. ground-launched—but only “many” naval—tactical nuclear warheads would be destroyed. On September 28, Chairman Powell specified that “many” meant about one-half.<sup>30</sup>

Additionally, and importantly, the OSD officials who worked on developing the PNI wanted to “challenge” the Soviet Union to reciprocate. The White House, the Joint Staff, and the military Services had all thought only in terms of unilateral U.S. actions, though they certainly hoped for some comparable actions by Moscow. OSD staff added the explicit “challenge” for Soviet reciprocity, and Cheney repeatedly used that word in the September 28 press conference.<sup>31</sup> Even though the desire for Soviet action became an important aspect of the PNI, there was no advance consultation, even in the most general of terms, with Soviet or Russian officials until the day of the announcement.

The call for Soviet reciprocity was driven primarily by concern over the security of Soviet nuclear warheads. Tactical nuclear warheads were a particular worry, given that they were wide-

ly dispersed, smaller, and easier to transport than weapons associated with strategic systems. In that view, reciprocity in tactical nuclear elimination (and central storage of the remaining weapons) would be especially welcome—even as Secretary Cheney and his staff agreed that the U.S. PNI measures could be taken unilaterally. In addition, they welcomed the PNIs' separation of arms reductions from negotiations and treaties. They considered formal arms control as unduly time-consuming and counterproductive, with each side freezing weapons inventories to avoid any unilateral concessions.<sup>32</sup>

Despite the addition of the reciprocity challenge, all concerned with the development of the PNIs emphasize that the U.S. Government was fully prepared to implement them unilaterally.<sup>33</sup> As discussed below, the only U.S. PNI elements to require reciprocity were the proposals for U.S.-Soviet dialogues and for a formal agreement that became START II.

At some points in the process, General Lee Butler, commander in chief, SAC, and then the Joint Chiefs of Staff approved the package.<sup>34</sup> It appears that the Joint Chiefs discussed the initial Joint Staff proposals before Chairman Powell submitted them to Secretary Cheney, and likely formally approved the final package after Secretary Cheney's compromise decision on ground- and sea-launched tactical weapons. Secretary Cheney and Chairman Powell then submitted the proposals to the President, who approved them without change.

There is no public record of any formal NSC meeting to discuss the package. A small number of State Department and ACDA officials were brought into the process a few days before the initiative was announced to help execute it. That included the preparation of pre-announcement communications to Moscow and some other capitals, and diplomatic communications to circulate background information worldwide immediately after the announcement. To underscore that this was a White House initiative, the briefings to State and ACDA officials took place in the White House complex, even though they were given by Frank Miller of OSD. By that time, the substance of the initiative was set.<sup>35</sup>

The Soviet Union and close allies of the United States were apprised of the PNI only at the most senior level, and just hours before the announcement. Presidential letters outlining the initiative were delivered to selected heads of government and the NATO Secretary-General at their opening of business on September 27. Beginning shortly after 7:00 a.m. in Washington, President Bush followed up with telephone calls to French President Francois Mitterrand, British Prime Minister John Major, German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, Gorbachev, and Yeltsin. National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft called NATO Secretary General Manfred Woerner.<sup>36</sup> It is not known how many other heads of government were informed in advance of the PNI, but the number appears to have been small.

The President asked Gorbachev, Yeltsin, Major, Mitterrand, and Kohl for their reactions to the initiative before his announcement. Still, the last-minute nature of his written and telephonic communications with them demonstrates that he was not seeking a detailed consultation. We do not know what would have happened if any of the leaders had objected to one or more PNI elements. However, it appears there were no objections. Yeltsin, Mitterrand, and Kohl warmly welcomed the proposals, without qualification. Major raised two issues, but does not seem to have opposed the package.<sup>37</sup>

The President's conversations with Gorbachev and Yeltsin are particularly noteworthy. First, it was both unusual—and a sign of White House expectations for the future—that President Bush telephoned Yeltsin on a foreign and defense policy matter. Second, Bush told Gorbachev he would be doing so (the Gorbachev call occurred about 3 hours before the call to Yeltsin). The Yeltsin conversation lasted just 3 minutes; the one with Gorbachev for 30 minutes. Gorbachev was positive, but somewhat cautious, and had several questions about what would and would not be included in the PNIs. Alone among the leaders with whom President Bush spoke, Gorbachev said that he had asked experts in his government for their initial reactions.

Bush and Gorbachev engaged in some speech-drafting, working out what the President would say on television that night about the Soviet leader's reaction. According to the Memorandum of Conversation, the exchange was as follows:

- *President Gorbachev: George, thank you for those clarifications. Since you're urging that we take steps, I can only give an answer in principle—since there is much that must be clarified—and that answer is a positive one.*
- *The President: I understand. How about if I say that I've consulted with Mikhail Gorbachev, and although he has had no time to study my initiative, that I am inclined to believe his response will be positive.*
- *President Gorbachev: I think that will be very good.*<sup>38</sup>

In his speech that night, President Bush used virtually the same words: "Today I consulted with President Gorbachev. And while he hasn't had time to absorb the details, I believe the Soviet response will clearly be positive."<sup>39</sup>

### **The September 27 Announcement**

President Bush announced the PNI in a rare televised address at 8:00 p.m. on Friday, September 27, 1991. He gave such prime-time speeches only a few times, and never before (or after) on arms control issues. This despite the fact that his administration saw the signature

of an unprecedented number of major arms control treaties: START, START II, the Chemical Weapons Convention, and the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty. The following afternoon, Secretary Cheney and Chairman Powell explained the PNI details in a Pentagon press conference.

The first PNI is remembered primarily for tactical nuclear reductions. While those were dramatic, the September 27 announcement also included several important unilateral measures on strategic nuclear weapons and proposals for new U.S.-Soviet cooperation.<sup>40</sup> At the same time, President Bush, Secretary Cheney, and Chairman Powell all stressed the importance of retaining a strong nuclear deterrent and developing and deploying defenses against ballistic missiles. They emphasized that the PNI would not significantly affect air-launched tactical nuclear weapons in Europe, the ballistic missile-carrying submarine (SSBN) force, or the nonmobile versions of the Peacekeeper and small ICBM. All of that was destined to change, to varying degrees, over the next few months.

### **Tactical Nuclear Forces**

Under the September 27 PNI, all U.S. ground-launched tactical nuclear weapons—about 1,000 artillery rounds and 700 Lance surface-to-surface missile warheads—would be removed from Europe. Those, and another 400 nuclear artillery and Lance warheads in the United States, would all be destroyed.<sup>41</sup>

All nuclear weapons would be removed from surface ships, attack submarines, and land-based naval aircraft. Those included: 100 nuclear TLAM-N that were routinely deployed; Mark 57 and Mark 61 naval nuclear bombs; and nuclear depth bombs associated with land-based nuclear naval P-3 aircraft and carrier-based S-3 aircraft. All in this latter category—approximately half of the total naval tactical nuclear stockpile—would be destroyed. The remainder, including all TLAM-N, would be put in storage.<sup>42</sup> The Department of Defense put notable public emphasis on the intention to retain the ability to redeploy TLAM-N—considered an important element of the U.S. nuclear umbrella for Asian allies.<sup>43</sup>

The September 27 PNI included only one element that concerned air-launched tactical nuclear forces in Europe: the cancellation of the SRAM-T (or Tactical Air-to-Surface Missile—TASM), the tactical version of the SRAM II. No PNI measures would affect currently deployed air-launched tactical nuclear warheads in Europe. That changed less than a month later. In its final communiqué from its October 17–18, 1991, meeting in Taormina, Italy, the NATO Nuclear Planning Group (NPG) announced: “In addition to the elimination of ground-launched nuclear systems [under the PNI], the number of air-delivered weapons in NATO’s European stockpile

will be greatly reduced.”<sup>44</sup> Press reports indicated that the NPG decided to cut deployed air-delivered tactical nuclear warheads by 50 percent, from about 1,400 to 700 gravity bombs.<sup>45</sup>

### **Strategic Nuclear Forces**

As discussed above, the foundation for the September 27 PNI measures concerning U.S. strategic forces was laid by the 1989–1991 SIOB Review. Many of the PNI strategic elements were also driven by budget considerations and the desire to send positive political signals to the Soviet Union. Those appear to have been the two primary motives behind the decisions to end strategic bomber alert, cancel the SRAM II program, and accelerate the elimination of Minuteman II ICBMs after entry-into-force of the START Treaty. The same two factors were important motivators for the cancellations of the mobile Peacekeeper and mobile small ICBM development programs, along with the growing recognition that mobile ICBM deployment in the United States would almost certainly never be feasible politically.

One PNI measure affecting strategic forces was purely symbolic: removal from alert of all the Minuteman II ICBMs slated for elimination under the START Treaty. That action could be reversed as quickly and easily as it had been implemented.<sup>46</sup>

A final PNI measure on strategic forces addressed the organization of DOD. President Bush announced that SAC would be replaced by a joint command, the United States Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM), responsible for all three legs of the U.S. strategic nuclear triad. Several military leaders had been interested in this concept for some years, and Congress had recommended it in the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986.<sup>47</sup> Further, the SIOB Review made clear the need for a single command able to develop requirements as well as targeting plans for the entire strategic force.<sup>48</sup>

### **Calls for Reciprocity**

While all of those measures for U.S. nuclear forces were unconditional, the President called on the Soviet Union to take reciprocal actions. He offered several specific ideas, suggesting that the Soviet Union:

- eliminate all its ground-launched nonstrategic nuclear forces, including nuclear artillery, nuclear warheads for short-range ballistic missiles and air-defense missiles, and nuclear land mines
- remove all tactical nuclear weapons from surface ships and submarines, withdraw nuclear weapons for land-based naval aircraft, destroy many naval tactical warheads and consolidate the rest in central storage areas
- limit ICBM modernization to one single-warhead system

- end all programs for future ICBMs with multiple independently-targetable reentry vehicles (MIRVs)
- confine mobile ICBMs to garrison.

The calls for reciprocity recognized the differences between U.S. and Soviet nuclear forces. For example, Soviet strategic bombers were not routinely kept on alert, while the United States had no mobile ICBMs. Therefore, a logical Soviet corollary to the U.S. termination of bomber alerts was to end movement of mobile ICBMs. To eliminate all their ground-launched tactical nuclear weapons, both sides would have to destroy nuclear artillery and short-range ballistic missile warheads, but the Soviets would also have to eliminate systems the United States no longer had: nuclear landmines and nuclear warheads for air defense.

### **Calls for Cooperation**

President Bush further proposed to the Soviet Union important new forms of cooperation. First, he suggested that the two governments explore cooperation on safe and secure nuclear warhead command and control, storage, transport, dismantlement, and destruction. President Bush acknowledged in his speech that this proposal built on an earlier one by French President Mitterrand, but it also went further. The idea reflected the strong concerns of the time about Soviet nuclear command and control, the need to consolidate as many nuclear weapons as possible in Russia, and the hope for major Soviet warhead reductions.<sup>49</sup>

President Bush also proposed U.S.-Soviet cooperation on practical steps to allow limited ballistic missile defenses beyond those permitted by the Antiballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty. This led in early 1992 to the so-called Ross-Mamedov talks, led by Dennis Ross, director of the State Department Policy Planning Staff, and Georgiy Mamedov, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister. Some observers believe the Ross-Mamedov talks held promise of a productive outcome, but they were cancelled by the new Clinton administration in early 1993.<sup>50</sup> They were immediately replaced by talks between Mamedov and Strobe Talbott, then Special Advisor to the Secretary of State for the New Independent States; however, those were not focused on missile defense.

Finally, President Bush suggested that the United States and Soviet Union “seek early agreement to eliminate from their inventories all ICBMs with multiple warheads.” He described what apparently would be a very simple, perhaps informal, agreement, under which the sides would agree on a timetable to eliminate MIRVed ICBMs (through missile destruction and/or warhead downloading), and use START Treaty procedures to implement it. This was the first serious public proposal to emerge from a longstanding U.S. concern about the dangers that MIRVed

ICBMs posed to strategic stability. U.S. civilian and military experts worried that there would be a strong temptation to launch MIRVed ICBMs preemptively in a crisis, given their vulnerability to attack and the potential loss of many warheads to only one or two enemy weapons. The eventual outcome of the September 27 proposal was the START II Treaty, signed in January 1993. START II was more detailed and formal than envisioned when the “de-MIRVing” idea was first raised, but it met the same U.S. strategic goals. However, the treaty never entered into force.

### **The Soviet Response**

At midday on October 5, 1991, a U.S. interagency team led by Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security Reginald Bartholomew arrived in Moscow. The team intended to meet with Soviet counterparts to explain the September 27 PNI more fully and to urge a positive Soviet response. However, shortly after arriving, Bartholomew was called to the Soviet Foreign Ministry and provided a copy of the television speech that President Gorbachev would give that evening.

The Soviet response was faster, wider-ranging, and more positive than even the most optimistic U.S. official would have predicted. A few of the measures proposed by Gorbachev were long-standing, ritual demands that the Soviet Government knew the United States would never accept: e.g., calls for a universal pledge of no-first-use of nuclear weapons and for withdrawal of all U.S. nuclear weapons from Europe. However, most were very much in the spirit of the U.S. initiative and demonstrated the Soviet President’s willingness—even eagerness—to reduce military forces and advance a new relationship with the United States and NATO.

### **Tactical Nuclear Forces**

Gorbachev committed to sweeping reductions of tactical nuclear weapons, most of which followed the U.S. measures and calls for reciprocity. He announced that the Soviet Union would eliminate all nuclear artillery, short-range missile nuclear warheads, and nuclear mines. The proliferation potential of the large number of ground-launched Soviet tactical nuclear weapons still deployed outside Russia, and especially in Ukraine and Belarus, undoubtedly provided a powerful motive for this Soviet commitment. Non-Russian republics might be loath to allow the transfer of tactical nuclear weapons from their territory if they thought they would simply add to the Russian arsenal. Their attitude toward those transfers would be far more positive if the weapons were to be destroyed and if the action was part of a unilateral/reciprocal arrangement with the United States.<sup>51</sup>

Gorbachev also announced that the Soviet Union, like the United States, would remove from deployment all tactical nuclear weapons for surface ships, submarines, and land-based



naval aircraft. He stated that “some” of those naval weapons would be eliminated, and the remainder placed in central storage. The Soviet Union did not at the time specify what portion of its tactical air defense or naval nuclear warheads would be destroyed; however, Yeltsin did so in January 1992. The practical consequences of removing Soviet weapons to “central storage” are unclear. Many U.S. observers concluded that the weapons would be stored in a few sites well away from operational bases, but that does not appear to be the case. Instead, “central storage” seems to have been—and to remain—only an organizational concept, specifying that the warheads would be under the control of the 12<sup>th</sup> Main Directorate of the Ministry of Defense (12<sup>th</sup> GUMO), rather than the navy, army, or air force. The concept has no locational implications.<sup>52</sup>

### **Strategic Nuclear Forces**

Gorbachev also echoed many of the U.S. measures for strategic nuclear forces, and responded at least somewhat positively to one of President Bush’s calls for reciprocity. He announced that the Soviet Union would remove from alert 503 ICBMs, including 134 MIRVed ICBMs, and all strategic bombers. The last was essentially meaningless, because Soviet bombers were not routinely on alert. Like President Bush, Gorbachev stated that his government would cancel development of its mobile small ICBM and short-range nuclear missile for bombers. He partially met U.S. reciprocity calls by announcing that the Soviet Union would not increase or modernize its rail-mobile SS-24 ICBM and would confine that system to garrison. No such commitments were made regarding the road-mobile SS-25 ICBM—whether on numbers, modernization, or deployment patterns.

Further, Gorbachev emulated President Bush in announcing that the Soviet Union would create a single operational command over all strategic nuclear weapons, including strategic defensive systems. That decision appears never to have been implemented. Responsibility for the three legs of the Russian triad remains with the Strategic Rocket Forces (ICBMs), navy, and air force.

In some respects, Gorbachev’s October 5 response went beyond President Bush’s September 27 measures on strategic forces. He announced that the Soviet Union would remove three SS-BNs from active duty (in addition to three that had already been removed). He also declared that the Soviet Union would reduce its total accountable strategic warheads to 5,000 (1,000 below the START ceiling) by the end of the treaty reduction period. Both actions simply reflected previously planned changes to Soviet strategic forces. The SSBNs were slated for elimination to meet START limits, and it seemed clear that the Soviet Union would not be able to sustain the 6,000 accountable warheads allowed under the treaty.

Finally, Gorbachev announced a 1-year unilateral moratorium on Soviet nuclear testing, “hoping to achieve the comprehensive cessation of nuclear testing.” He had instituted previous

testing moratoria from August 1985 to October 1987 and from November 1989 to October 1990. The last acknowledged Soviet (or Russian) test was in October 1990.<sup>53</sup> In their telephone conversation about the PNI on September 27, Gorbachev urged President Bush to “consider moves on testing” to accompany the reductions in numbers and types of nuclear weapons. President Bush replied that the United States was “reluctant on testing,” but that the sides “would need to consult on that.”<sup>54</sup>

### **Calls for Reciprocity**

Gorbachev proposed two measures on tactical nuclear weapons that the Soviet Union would take only if the United States reciprocated. Both were longstanding Soviet proposals that the leadership probably expected to fail. That was certainly the case with one proposal: “to withdraw from combat units on frontal aviation, all nuclear weapons and place them in centralized storage sites.” This was code for the removal of all U.S. nuclear weapons from Europe—a position that was unacceptable at the time to the United States and most (if not all) NATO Allies. The second reciprocity proposal—to “eliminate fully . . . all tactical nuclear weapons of naval forces”—would, as discussed above, be positively received by many in the U.S. Navy. However, there appeared to be no U.S. interest in reopening that issue after Secretary Cheney’s compromise decision allowing for only partial elimination of such weapons. Almost 19 years would elapse before the DOD decided to retire the TLAM-N.

Gorbachev made two references to multilateralizing the PNI: “The USSR calls other nuclear powers to join in these far reaching Soviet-American steps with respect to tactical nuclear weapons” and “we sincerely hope that, in the final analysis, other nuclear powers will actively join the efforts of the USSR and the United States.” Two obvious targets of those statements were the United Kingdom and France. They reprised a favorite Soviet theme—for years, the Soviet Union insisted in the INF Treaty negotiations that any equal limits apply to the Soviet Union on one side and to the United States, UK, and France combined on the other. But Gorbachev did not stress the issue in his October 5 speech; instead, these references appear to have been a ritual nod to hard-line Soviet positions. In any case, the idea was a nonstarter for the United States. President Bush did not mention third-party nuclear forces in his September 27 address; the first point he made to both Prime Minister Major and President Mitterrand in their conversations that morning was that the PNIs were completely separate from British and French nuclear force decisions.<sup>55</sup>

Gorbachev’s third multilateral proposal on October 5 was for a “joint declaration of all nuclear powers on no first use of nuclear weapons.” Here, the major target appears to have been

the United States: “a step of the American side in this direction would be an important milestone on the path toward establishing a durable structure of mutual security.” Whether the proposal was for bilateral or multilateral declarations, it would be ignored by the United States—as Gorbachev and his advisers no doubt understood.

### **Calls for Cooperation**

Gorbachev accepted President Bush’s proposals for U.S.-Soviet discussions on missile defense and nuclear warhead safety, security, and command and control. On missile defense, he added a proposal to discuss possible development of joint early-warning systems. He was less forthcoming on nuclear warhead safety and security, appearing to want to limit discussion to relevant technologies, rather than to venture into more sensitive areas of nuclear weapons practice and procedures.<sup>56</sup>

Gorbachev did not respond to President Bush’s call for an agreement to eliminate U.S. and Soviet MIRVed ICBMs. Instead, he proposed that the sides negotiate, immediately after START entry-into-force, a new treaty that would reduce each side’s strategic forces by about one-half. Gorbachev also proposed an agreement to end U.S. and Soviet fissile material production. There is no evidence that the George H.W. Bush administration followed up on that idea, but President Bill Clinton proposed a multilateral Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT) in September 1993. The United Nations Conference on Disarmament has had the issue on its agenda ever since, without being able to agree to begin negotiations.

### **The Path to PNI II**

Immediately after the Gorbachev speech, the U.S. interagency team that had come to Moscow to urge Soviet PNI reciprocity turned its attention to implementation. The U.S. and Soviet teams discussed how each government planned to implement its unilateral commitments, and agreed to inform each other of progress through periodic implementation reports. They also set up initial discussions on missile defense, concepts of strategic stability, and nuclear warhead safety and security, which occurred later that fall. Russian Foreign Minister Kozyrev stressed to the U.S. group the importance of the proposal for deep strategic reductions after the START Treaty; he was convinced that Russia would have to accept major cuts if it was to persuade Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan to give up the nuclear forces on their soil.<sup>57</sup>

As the Kozyrev discussion shows, the few months between the Bush-Gorbachev PNI announcements in September-October 1991 and the Bush-Yeltsin ones in January 1992 were dominated by the prospect and then the reality of the fall of the Soviet Union. The process moved with astonishing speed. By December 1, all the Soviet republics had declared their independence.

On December 8, Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus, meeting in Minsk (Belarus), declared the dissolution of the Soviet Union and creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States. The same basic points were made by 11 republic heads in the Alma-Ata Declaration on December 21.<sup>58</sup> On December 25, Gorbachev submitted his resignation as President of the Soviet Union, and the Russian tricolor flag was raised over the Kremlin in place of the hammer and sickle.

The United States was active during this period in seeking to help ensure a peaceful transition, to establish productive relationships with the new republics, to keep on track U.S.-Soviet arms reduction agreements (whether formal or informal), and to work to prevent weapons of mass destruction proliferation. On December 12, just a few days after the Minsk Declaration, President Bush signed into law the Soviet Nuclear Threat Reduction Act of 1991, creating the Nunn-Lugar program. In mid-month, Secretary of State James A. Baker III led an interagency team to Moscow, Alma-Ata, Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan), Kiev (Ukraine), and Minsk, to discuss the future U.S. relationship with the independent republics; nuclear weapons issues were a major, but not exclusive, focus of his talks. In mid-January 1992, Under Secretary of State Bartholomew led another interagency team to Moscow, Alma-Ata, Kiev, and Minsk, for the first of many detailed discussions of Russian weapons reductions, Ukraine-Belarus-Kazakhstan denuclearization, and potential Nunn-Lugar assistance in both areas. Finally, Russian President Yeltsin was invited for talks with President Bush and his senior advisors on February 1, 1992, at Camp David.

### **PNI II**

It was in this context that President Bush presented additional PNI measures—often referred to as “PNI II”—in his State of the Union address on January 28, 1992. On September 27–28, President Bush, Secretary Cheney, and Chairman Powell had stressed the importance of retaining strong nuclear forces. Thus, the administration stated that it would move forward with production of the silo-based Peacekeeper ICBM and the B-2 strategic bomber, and with development of the silo-based small ICBM. No changes would be made to the strategic submarine force, or to U.S. air-delivered tactical nuclear forces beyond the cancellation of SRAM-T. Nevertheless, as we have seen, reductions in air-delivered tactical nuclear weapons were announced just a few weeks later. By late January, it was the turn of several strategic programs.

There does not appear to have been a dedicated process to develop a PNI II package—or at least not one that was comparable to the September effort. Instead, most of the PNI II decisions seem to have emerged from preparation of the President’s budget request for Fiscal Year 1994. There was strong pressure at the time to maximize the “peace dividend” resulting from the fall of the Soviet Union and the development of a new partnership with the Russian Federation.

While the first PNI is remembered mainly for its tactical nuclear reductions, PNI II concerned strategic forces exclusively. The President cancelled the silo-based small ICBM program, ended production of the Peacekeeper ICBM, capped production of B-2 strategic bombers at 20 aircraft, and terminated procurement of additional advanced cruise missiles. Further, the President announced an end to production of new W-88 warheads for the Trident II D-5 SLBM.<sup>59</sup>

The PNIs are renowned for being unilateral/reciprocal—arms control without agreements. But one of the most important elements of PNI II was a proposal for a “de-MIRVing” treaty that built on—but was much more detailed than—the one in the PNI package of September 27. President Bush announced that he had told President Yeltsin that if Russia eliminated all its MIRVed ICBMs, the United States would eliminate all Peacekeeper ICBMs, download all Minuteman ICBMs to one warhead, reduce deployed SLBM warheads by “about one-third,” and “convert a substantial portion of our strategic bombers to primarily conventional use.” Those few words outlined the core of what became the START II Treaty. Compared to the PNIs, the process leading to START II was more of a traditional negotiation involving interagency teams on both sides. Still, it moved much faster than the preceding U.S.-Soviet arms control agreements. It could do so in part because of the changed political environment, and in part because it relied on many START I provisions, including verification.

## The Russian Response

While Gorbachev learned of the September 27, 1991, PNI just hours before it became public, it appears that Yeltsin was given more advance notice of President Bush’s January 1992 proposals. President Bush noted in his State of the Union address that he had informed Yeltsin of the de-MIRVing proposal, and Yeltsin offered his PNIs in considerable detail in a television address the very next day. Yeltsin’s speech reaffirmed many elements announced by Gorbachev on October 5, but also included new unilateral commitments and proposals for reciprocal or joint action with the United States.

With respect to tactical weapons, Yeltsin reaffirmed that nuclear warheads for ground-launched short-range missiles, nuclear artillery shells, and nuclear land mines would be eliminated. He added, without explanation, that “measures in this direction have already been taken.”<sup>60</sup> Going beyond Gorbachev’s announcement, Yeltsin was more specific on plans to eliminate other tactical nuclear weapons types. He stated that Russia would destroy one-half of all air-defense nuclear warheads and one-third of sea-based tactical nuclear warheads. Even more important, he announced a new commitment to eliminate one-half of Russian air-launched

tactical nuclear weapons; Gorbachev had offered no measures on such weapons other than the proposal for reciprocal withdrawal to central storage.

With respect to strategic forces, Yeltsin added substantially to the measures put forth earlier by Gorbachev. Much of what he announced may have been motivated at least in part by a desire to improve relations with the United States and NATO. The most important considerations, however, probably were the severe economic difficulties facing Russia, and the recognition (shared with Gorbachev) that unrestrained military spending was not possible if the country was to be modern, democratic, and fiscally stable. Yeltsin announced an end to production of the Backfire and Blackjack bombers, current air-launched cruise missiles (ALCMs), and long-range sea-launched cruise missiles (SLCMs). He also committed not to produce new types of SLCMs. Further, Yeltsin declared a goal of reaching the START Treaty limit of 6,000 deployed warheads by 3 years after entry-into-force—4 years before the end of the treaty reduction period.

Yeltsin also introduced changes to expensive military practices. There would be no more military exercises with over 30 bombers, and SSBN combat patrols had “been halved and will be reduced further.” Finally, Yeltsin appeared to reaffirm several of the Gorbachev statements about early preparations for START reductions.<sup>61</sup>

Yeltsin also made several proposals for U.S.-Russian reciprocal steps. One repeated Gorbachev’s proposal to place all remaining air-launched tactical nuclear weapons in central storage. The others were new: to eliminate all existing long-range nuclear SLCMs, forswear production of new ALCM types, end SSBN combat patrols, and eliminate existing antisatellite weapons (ASATs). None of these was in any way acceptable to the United States.

Two Yeltsin proposals for negotiations were also nonstarters for the United States: one aimed at an ASAT ban and one at further limits on nuclear testing. His repetition of Gorbachev’s proposed bilateral agreement to end fissile material production was much less objectionable, but again, there was no reported follow-up during the remaining year of the Bush administration.

Yeltsin also proposed a new treaty to reduce accountable strategic warheads to 2,000–2,500 warheads on each side. That was farther than the United States was willing to go at the time; the final START II limit was 3,000–3,500.<sup>62</sup> Yeltsin added his hope that China, France, and the UK would join the nuclear reduction process, but he implied that would be in a later stage of the arms control process.<sup>63</sup>

The Bush administration may have seen the most promise in Yeltsin’s expression of willingness “to continue discussion without prejudice of the U.S. proposal for limiting non-nuclear ABM

systems.” Potentially even more important was the statement that “we are ready jointly to work out and subsequently to create and jointly operate a global system of defense in place of SDI [the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative].” The aforementioned Ross-Mamedov talks began shortly thereafter.

## Conclusion

The Presidential Nuclear Initiatives instituted the most sweeping nuclear arms reductions in history. Between December 1990 (months before the first PNI announcement) and December 1994 (when the START Treaty entered into force), the U.S. nuclear stockpile of active and inactive warheads fell by 50 percent, from 21,392 to 10,979. No other period in U.S. nuclear history witnessed such a large reduction—whether measured in numbers or as a percentage of the total—in such a short time.<sup>64</sup> The speed and decisiveness of the decision processes involved were equally unique.

The PNI were inspired—and made possible—by an extraordinary confluence of factors:

- a U.S. President who was fully expert in, and placed a high priority on, national security issues, who enjoyed historically high approval ratings, and who had a vision of the international future
- a national security team at Cabinet level and below that shared (or at least accepted) the President’s vision and could work together effectively
- world-changing developments in Central and Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, whose pace was astonishing—and accelerating
- the decisive U.S. victory in Operation Desert Storm that underscored the strength of U.S. conventional military capabilities
- declining support among the NATO Allies and in the Congress for nuclear weapons modernization.

Of these, the most critical factors were the President’s leadership and the geopolitical changes in Central-Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Those changes did not permit long deliberation or great caution. They demanded—but also allowed—rapid, dramatic action. The President and his team saw in them both a need and an opportunity that they were prepared and able to seize.

The PNIs were universally welcomed when they were announced, but their implementation proved disappointing to many. Serious concerns developed within just a year or two about the extent to which Russia was fulfilling its PNI commitments. The sides exchanged detailed implementation reports at the beginning, but the Russian submissions grew progressively less

informative over time, until finally the report exchanges ceased. The question of Russian PNI “obligations” is a tricky one, given that the PNIs are not legally binding. Nevertheless, in 1991–1992, both governments considered their unilateral measures to be firm political commitments. The United States continues to hold that view, but the Russian Government apparently does not. In recent years, several Russian Government officials have denied that the PNIs remain a political obligation. Many reportedly see the PNIs as an unpleasant reminder of the time when the dying Soviet Union and newly independent Russia were weak.<sup>65</sup>

Those major doubts about Russian implementation of the PNIs have led many observers to conclude that the initiatives were failures. It is noteworthy that no one interviewed for this case study who was officially involved in the U.S. PNIs shares that negative judgment. All emphasize that they view the PNIs as a success. First, the President and the DOD leadership were completely willing at the time to implement the PNI measures unilaterally. Second, the United States did not expect that the Soviet Union would take up the reciprocity “challenge” as quickly and fully as it did. Under those circumstances, these officials see even incomplete Russian implementation as far better than nothing, involving significant reductions.

Twenty years later, the issues of U.S. and Russian tactical nuclear weapons, and their potential reduction, are once again at the forefront. On December 22, 2010, the U.S. Senate, by a vote of 71 to 26, consented to ratification of the New START Treaty. One of the Senate conditions required the President to certify that the United States would seek negotiations with Russia to reduce tactical nuclear weapons in an equitable, verifiable manner.<sup>66</sup> In doing so, the Senate made clear that it would not favor a revival of the unilateral/reciprocal methods of the PNIs. Still, there remains some interest in “arms control without agreements” both within and outside the U.S. Government. While the outcome is at best uncertain, it appears clear that the political and strategic environment in both the United States and Russia has changed too much for a return to unilateral/reciprocal measures of the scope and scale of 1991–1992. The Presidential Nuclear Initiatives, and their decision processes, were unique at the time, and will almost certainly remain so.



# Appendix A

## Text of Presidential Nuclear Initiative Announcements

President George H.W. Bush

The White House

Friday, September 27, 1991<sup>67</sup>

Good evening.

Tonight I'd like to speak with you about our future and the future of the generations to come. The world has changed at a fantastic pace, with each day writing a fresh page of history before yesterday's ink has even dried. And most recently, we've seen the peoples of the Soviet Union turn to democracy and freedom, and discard a system of government based on oppression and fear.

Like the East Europeans before them, they face the daunting challenge of building fresh political structures, based on human rights, democratic principles, and market economies. Their task is far from easy and far from over. They will need our help, and they will get it.

But these dramatic changes challenge our Nation as well. Our country has always stood for freedom and democracy. And when the newly elected leaders of Eastern Europe grappled with forming their new governments, they looked to the United States. They looked to American democratic principles in building their own free societies. Even the leaders of the U.S.S.R. Republics are reading *The Federalist Papers*, written by America's founders to find new ideas and inspiration.

Today, America must lead again, as it always has, as only it can. And we will. We must also provide the inspiration for lasting peace. And we will do that, too. We can now take steps in response to these dramatic developments, steps that can help the Soviet peoples in their quest for peace and prosperity. More importantly, we can now take steps to make the world a less dangerous place than ever before in the nuclear age.

A year ago, I described a new strategy for American defenses, reflecting the world's changing security environment. That strategy shifted our focus away from the fear that preoccupied us for 40 years—the prospect of a global confrontation. Instead, it concentrated more on regional conflicts, such as the one we just faced in the Persian Gulf.

I spelled out a strategic concept, guided by the need to maintain the forces required to exercise forward presence in key areas, to respond effectively in crises, to maintain a credible nuclear deterrent, and to retain the national capacity to rebuild our forces should that be needed.

We are now moving to reshape the U.S. military to reflect that concept. The new base force will be smaller by half a million than today's military, with fewer Army divisions, Air Force wings, Navy ships, and strategic nuclear forces. This new force will be versatile, able to respond around the world to challenges, old and new.

As I just mentioned, the changes that allowed us to adjust our security strategy a year ago have greatly accelerated. The prospect of a Soviet invasion into Western Europe, launched with little or no warning, is no longer a realistic threat. The Warsaw Pact has crumbled. In the Soviet Union, the advocates of democracy triumphed over a coup that would have restored the old system of repression. The reformers are now starting to fashion their own futures, moving even faster toward democracy's horizon.

New leaders in the Kremlin and the Republics are now questioning the need for their huge nuclear arsenal. The Soviet nuclear stockpile now seems less an instrument of national security, and more of a burden. As a result, we now have an unparalleled opportunity to change the nuclear posture of both the United States and the Soviet Union.

If we and the Soviet leaders take the right steps—some on our own, some on their own, some together—we can dramatically shrink the arsenal of the world's nuclear weapons. We can more effectively discourage the spread of nuclear weapons. We can rely more on defensive measures in our strategic relationship. We can enhance stability and actually reduce the risk of nuclear war. Now is the time to seize this opportunity.

After careful study and consultations with my senior advisers, and after considering valuable counsel from Prime Minister Major, President Mitterrand, Chancellor Kohl, and other allied leaders, I am announcing today a series of sweeping initiatives affecting every aspect of our nuclear forces on land, on ship, and on aircraft. I met again today with our Joint Chiefs of Staff, and I can tell you they wholeheartedly endorse each of these steps.

I'll begin with the category in which we will make the most fundamental change in nuclear forces in over 40 years, non-strategic or theater weapons.

Last year, I cancelled U.S. plans to modernize our ground-launched theater nuclear weapons. Later, our NATO allies joined us in announcing that the alliance would propose the mutual elimination of all nuclear artillery shells from Europe as soon as short-range nuclear force negotiations began with the Soviets. But starting these talks now would only perpetuate these systems, while we engage in lengthy negotiations. Last month's events not only permit, but indeed demand swifter, bolder action.

I am therefore directing that the United States eliminate its entire world-wide inventory of ground-launched short-range, that is, theater nuclear weapons. We will bring home and destroy all of

our nuclear artillery shells and short-range ballistic missile warheads. We will, of course, ensure that we preserve an effective air-delivered nuclear capability in Europe. That is essential to NATO's security.

In turn, I have asked the Soviets to go down this road with us, to destroy their entire inventory of ground-launched theater nuclear weapons: not only their nuclear artillery and nuclear warheads for short-range ballistic missiles, but also the theater systems the U.S. no longer has, systems like nuclear warheads for air-defense missiles, and nuclear land mines.

Recognizing further the major changes in the international military landscape, the United States will withdraw all tactical nuclear weapons from its surface ships and attack submarines, as well as those nuclear weapons associated with our land-based naval aircraft. This means removing all nuclear Tomahawk cruise missiles from U.S. ships and submarines, as well as nuclear bombs aboard aircraft carriers. The bottom line is that under normal circumstances our ships will not carry tactical nuclear weapons.

Many of these land and sea-based warheads will be dismantled and destroyed.

Those remaining will be secured in central areas where they would be available if necessary in a future crisis.

Again, there is every reason for the Soviet Union to match our actions: by removing all tactical nuclear weapons from its ships and attack submarines; by withdrawing nuclear weapons for land-based naval aircraft; and by destroying many of them and consolidating what remains at central locations. I urge them to do so.

No category of nuclear weapons has received more attention than those in our strategic arsenals. The Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, START, which President Gorbachev and I signed last July was the culmination of almost a decade's work. It calls for substantial stabilizing reductions and effective verification. Prompt ratification by both parties is essential.

But I also believe the time is right to use START as a springboard to achieve additional stabilizing changes.

First, to further reduce tensions, I'm directing that all United States strategic bombers immediately stand down from their alert posture. As a comparable gesture, I call upon the Soviet Union to consign its mobile missiles to their garrisons where they will be safer and more secure.

Second, the United States will immediately stand down from alert all intercontinental ballistic missiles scheduled for deactivation under START. Rather than waiting for the treaty's reduction plan to run its full 7 year course, we will accelerate elimination of these systems, once START is ratified. I call upon the Soviet Union to do the same.

Third, I am terminating the development of the mobile Peacekeeper ICBM, as well as the mobile portion of the small ICBM program. The small single-warhead ICBM will be our only

remaining ICBM modernization program. I call upon the Soviets to terminate any and all programs for future ICBMs with more than one warhead, and to limit ICBM modernization to one type of single warhead missile, just as we have done.

Fourth, I am cancelling the current program to build a replacement for the nuclear short-range attack missile for our strategic bombers.

Fifth, as a result of the strategic nuclear weapons adjustments that I've just outlined, the United States will streamline its command and control procedures, allowing us to more effectively manage our strategic nuclear forces.

As the system works now, the Navy commands the submarine part of our strategic deterrent, while the Air Force commands the bomber and land-based element. But as we reduce our strategic forces, the operational command structure must be as direct as possible. And I have therefore approved the recommendation of Secretary Cheney and the Joint Chiefs to consolidate operational command of these forces into a U.S. strategic command under one commander with participation from both services.

Since the 1970's, the most vulnerable and unstable part of the U.S. and Soviet nuclear forces has been intercontinental missiles with more than one warhead. Both sides have these ICBM's in fixed silos in the ground, where they are more vulnerable than missiles on submarines.

I propose that the U.S. and the Soviet Union seek early agreement to eliminate from their inventory all ICBM's with multiple warheads. After developing a timetable acceptable to both sides, we could rapidly move to modify or eliminate these systems under procedures already established in the START agreement. In short, such an action would take away the single most unstable part of our nuclear arsenals.

But there is more to do. The United States and the Soviet Union are not the only nations with ballistic missiles. Some 15 nations have them now, and in less than a decade, that number could grow to 20. The recent conflict in the Persian Gulf demonstrates in no uncertain terms, that the time has come for strong action on these growing threats to world peace.

Accordingly, I am calling on the Soviet leadership to join us in taking immediate, concrete steps, to permit the limited deployment of non-nuclear defenses to protect against limited ballistic missile strikes, whatever their source, without undermining the credibility of existing deterrent forces. And we will intensify our efforts to curb nuclear and missile proliferation. These two efforts will be mutually reinforcing. To foster cooperation, the United States soon will propose additional initiatives in the area of ballistic missile early warning.

Finally, let me discuss yet another opportunity for cooperation that can make our world safer.

During last month's attempted coup in Moscow, many Americans asked me if I thought Soviet nuclear weapons were under adequate control. I do not believe that America was at increased risk of nuclear attack during those tense days. But I do believe more can be done to ensure the safe handling and dismantling of Soviet nuclear weapons. Therefore, I propose that we begin discussions with the Soviet Union to explore cooperation in three areas: First, we should explore joint technical cooperation on the safe and environmentally responsible storage, transportation, dismantling, and destruction of nuclear warheads. Second, we should discuss existing arrangements for the physical security and safety of nuclear weapons and how these might be enhanced. And third, we should discuss nuclear command and control arrangements, and how these might be improved to provide more protection against the unauthorized or accidental use of nuclear weapons.

My friend, French President Mitterrand, offered a similar idea a short while ago. After further consultations with the alliance and when the leadership in the U.S.S.R. is ready, we will begin this effort.

The initiatives that I'm announcing build on the new defense strategy that I set out a year ago, one that shifted our focus away from the prospect of global confrontation. We're consulting with our allies on the implementation of many of these steps which fit well with the new post-cold war strategy and force posture that we've developed in NATO.

As we implement these initiatives we will closely watch how the new Soviet leadership responds. We expect our bold initiatives to meet with equally bold steps on the Soviet side. If this happens, further cooperation is inevitable. If it does not, then an historic opportunity will have been lost. Regardless, let no one doubt we will still retain the necessary strength to protect our security and that of our allies and to respond as necessary.

In addition, regional instabilities, the spread of weapons of mass destruction, and as we saw during the conflict in the Gulf, territorial ambitions of power-hungry tyrants, still require us to maintain a strong military to protect our national interests and to honor commitments to our allies.

Therefore, we must implement a coherent plan for a significantly smaller but fully capable military, one that enhances stability but is still sufficient to convince any potential adversary that the cost of aggression would exceed any possible gain.

We can safely afford to take the steps I've announced today, steps that are designed to reduce the danger of miscalculation in a crisis. But to do so, we must also pursue vigorously those elements of our strategic modernization program that serve the same purpose. We must fully fund the B-2 and SDI program. We can make radical changes in the nuclear postures of both

sides to make them smaller, safer, and more stable. But the United States must maintain modern nuclear forces including the strategic triad and thus ensure the credibility of our deterrent.

Some will say that these initiatives call for a budget windfall for domestic programs. But the peace dividend I seek is not measured in dollars but in greater security. In the near term, some of these steps may even cost money. Given the ambitious plan I have already proposed to reduce U.S. defense spending by 25 percent, we cannot afford [sic] to make any unwise or unwarranted cuts in the defense budget that I submitted to Congress. I am counting on congressional support to ensure we have the funds necessary to restructure our forces prudently and implement the decisions that I have outlined tonight.

Twenty years ago when I had the opportunity to serve this country as Ambassador to the United Nations, I once talked about the vision that was in the minds of the U.N.'s founders, how they dreamed of a new age when the great powers of the world would cooperate in peace as they had as allies in war.

Today I consulted with President Gorbachev. And while he hasn't had time to absorb the details, I believe the Soviet response will clearly be positive. I also spoke with President Yeltsin, and he had a similar reaction, positive, hopeful.

Now the Soviet people and their leaders can shed the heavy burden of a dangerous and costly nuclear arsenal which has threatened world peace for the past five decades. They can join us in these dramatic moves toward a new world of peace and security.

Tonight, as I see the drama of democracy unfolding around the globe, perhaps we are closer to that new world than [sic] every [sic] before. The future is ours to influence, to shape, to mold. While we must not gamble that future, neither can we forfeit the historic opportunity now before us.

It has been said, "Destiny is not a matter of change. It is a matter of choice. It is not a thing to be waited for. It's a thing to be achieved." The United States has always stood where duty required us to stand. Now let them say that we led where destiny required us to lead, to a more peaceful, hopeful future. We cannot give a more precious gift to the children of the world.

Thank you, good night, and God bless the United States of America.

**President Mikhail Gorbachev**

**Saturday, October 5, 1991**<sup>68</sup>

Dear compatriots, a week ago US President Bush put forward an important initiative on nuclear weapons. This initiative confirms that a new way of thinking has been widely supported by the world community. George Bush's proposals are a worthy continuation of the drive started in Reykjavik. This is my principled opinion. I know that Boris Yeltsin and leaders of other republics share this opinion. In this statement I will announce our reciprocal steps and countermeasures. First, with respect to tactical nuclear weapons, the Soviet Union will take the following steps:

- All nuclear artillery munitions and nuclear warheads for tactical rockets shall be eliminated.
- Nuclear warheads for air defense missiles shall be withdrawn from the troops and concentrated in central bases, and a portion of them shall be eliminated. All nuclear mines shall be eliminated.
- All tactical nuclear weapons shall be removed from surface ships and multi-purpose submarines. These weapons, as well as nuclear weapons on land-based naval aviation, shall be stored in central storage sites and a portion shall be eliminated.

In this fashion, on the basis of reciprocity the Soviet Union and the United States will take essential steps aimed at the elimination of tactical nuclear weapons. [The procedures and timing for carrying out these measures could be agreed on between the sides through consultations.<sup>69</sup>]

Moreover, we propose that the United States eliminate fully, on the basis of reciprocity, all tactical nuclear weapons of naval forces. In addition, on the basis of reciprocity, it would be possible to withdraw from combat units on frontal (tactical) aviation, all nuclear weapons (gravity bombs and air-launched missiles) and place them in centralized storage bases. The USSR calls upon other nuclear powers to join in these far reaching Soviet-American steps with respect to tactical nuclear weapons.

Second, together with the US, we are in favor of the quickest possible ratification of the historic START treaty, signed in Moscow this summer. As president of the USSR, I intend to present this issue at the first session of the Supreme Soviet in its new composition.

Taking into account the unilateral measures on strategic offensive arms, declared by President Bush, we are undertaking the following actions:

- Our heavy bombers, just as the American ones, shall not be on alert status, while their nuclear arms shall be placed in storage with military units.
- We are stopping the development of the modified nuclear short-range missile for Soviet heavy bombers.
- We are stopping the development in the USSR of the small mobile intercontinental ballistic missile.
- The number of rail-mobile ICBM launchers will not be increased above the current number and such missiles will not be modernized. In this fashion, the number of our mobile MIRVed ICBMs will not be increased.
- All our rail-mobile ICBMs will remain in their permanent basing areas.
- As a reciprocal step, the Soviet Union will remove from alert status 503 ICBMs, including 134 MIRVed ICBMs.
- The Soviet Union has already decommissioned three nuclear missile submarines with 44 launchers of SLBMs and will decommission an additional three submarines with 48 launchers.

Third, we have decided on deeper reductions of strategic offensive arms than provided for in the START treaty. As a result, at the end of the seven-year period of reductions, the number of strategic nuclear warheads on our side will be 5,000, rather than the 6,000 required by the treaty.

We would, of course, welcome a similar approach from the US side.

We propose to the US that immediately after the ratification of the START treaty, we begin intensive negotiations on further radical reductions of strategic offensive arms by approximately one-half.

We are ready to discuss the US proposal on non-nuclear ABM systems.

We also propose to the US side to examine the possibility of developing joint early warning systems of nuclear attacks with land- and space-based elements.

Fourth, with a view to giving new impetus to nuclear disarmament, we announce the introduction, beginning today, of a unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing for one year, hoping to achieve the comprehensive cessation of nuclear testing.

We are for reaching agreement with the United States on the verified cessation of the production of all weapons-grade fissionable materials.

Fifth, we express our readiness to enter into a substantive dialogue with the United States on the development of safe and ecologically sound technologies for the storing and transportation of nuclear warheads, methods of recycling nuclear weapons devices, and enhancing nuclear security.



With the aim of enhancing the reliability of control over nuclear weapons, we will unite under a single operational command all strategic nuclear forces. We will include strategic defensive systems in a single military service.

Sixth, we sincerely hope that, in the final analysis, other nuclear powers will actively join the efforts of the USSR and the United States.

A joint declaration of all nuclear powers on no first use of nuclear weapons could play an exceptionally useful role in the strengthening of stability and mutual trust. The USSR has already firmly adhered to this principle for a long time.

I am convinced that a step of the American side in this direction would be an important milestone on the path toward establishing a durable structure of mutual security.

Seventh, we note with satisfaction the plans of the US Administration to reduce the American armed forces by 500,000 men in the next few years. In this connection, we intend to reduce the Soviet armed forces by 700,000 men.

In conclusion, I want to emphasize the following: Acting in this fashion (in one case unilaterally, in a second on a compromise basis, in a third through negotiations) nonetheless we are resolutely furthering the disarmament process, thereby approaching the goal which was proclaimed back at the beginning of 1986: toward a nuclear-free world. There is much work here: for governments, experts, agencies. We have here a new stage of strengthening strategic stability and creating durable, general security.

Evidently, the question also arises of a new USSR-US summit. I have been speaking to US President George Bush. I told him about our countersteps in connection with his initiative. At the same time, I voiced proposals for a summit meeting. There was a good exchange of views. He gave me a positive assessment of our proposals, and stated his satisfaction with how we are acting and addressing some of the most major issues in world politics.

**President George H.W. Bush**

**Excerpts from State of the Union Address**

**January 28, 1992**<sup>70</sup>

Two years ago, I began planning cuts in military spending that reflected the changes of the new era. But now, this year, with imperial communism gone, that process can be accelerated. Tonight I can tell you of dramatic changes in our strategic nuclear force. These are actions we are taking on our own because they are the right thing to do. After completing 20 planes for which we have begun procurement, we will shut down further production of the B-2 bombers. We will cancel the small ICBM program. We will cease production of new warheads for our sea-based ballistic missiles. We still stop all new production of the Peacekeeper missile. And we will not purchase any more advanced cruise missiles.

This weekend I will meet at Camp David with Boris Yeltsin of the Russian Federation. I've informed President Yeltsin that if the Commonwealth, the former Soviet Union, will eliminate all land-based multiple-warhead ballistic missiles, I will do the following: We will eliminate all Peacekeeper missiles. We will reduce the number of warheads on Minuteman missiles to one and reduce the number of warheads on our sea-based missiles by about one-third. And we will convert a substantial portion of our strategic bombers to primarily conventional use. President Yeltsin's early response has been very positive, and I expect our talks at Camp David to be fruitful.

I want you to know that for half a century, American presidents have longed to make such decisions and say such words. But even in the midst of celebration, we must keep caution as a friend. For the world is still a dangerous place. Only the dead have seen the end of conflict. And though yesterday's challenges are behind us, tomorrow's are being born.

The Secretary of Defense recommended these cuts after consultation with the Joint Chiefs of Staff. And I make them with confidence. But do not misunderstand me. The reductions I have approved will save us an additional billion over the next 5 years. By 1997 we will have cut defense by 30 percent since I took office. These cuts are deep, and you must know my resolve: This deep, and no deeper. To do less would be insensible to progress, but to do more would be ignorant of history. We must not go back to the days of "the hollow army." We cannot repeat the mistakes made twice in this century, when armistice was followed by recklessness and defense was purged as if the world were permanently safe.

I remind you this evening that I have asked for your support in funding a program to protect our country from limited nuclear missile attack. We must have this protection because too

many people in too many countries have access to nuclear arms. And I urge you again to pass this Strategic Defense Initiative, SDI.

There are those who say that now we can turn away from the world, that we have no special role, no special place. But we are the United States of America, the leader of the West that has become the leader of the world. And as long as I am President, I will continue to lead in support of freedom everywhere, not out of arrogance, not out of altruism, but for the safety and security of our children. This is a fact: Strength in the pursuit of peace is no vice; isolationism in the pursuit of security is no virtue.

**President Boris N. Yeltsin**

**January 29, 1992**<sup>71</sup>

Respected citizens of Russia. My address today is devoted to an issue of vital significance. It is a matter of practical measures by Russia in the sphere of the limitation and reduction of weapons.

Our fundamental position is the following: Nuclear weapons and other means of mass destruction in the world must be eliminated. Of course, this must be done gradually and on an equal basis. In this vitally important matter we are open to cooperation with all states and international organizations, including within the framework of the United Nations.

The measures I will speak about today have been prepared on the basis of constant interaction among member states of the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS] and in accordance with the accords reached at the meetings of their leaders in Minsk, Alma-Ata, and Moscow.

Russia considers itself the legal successor to the USSR in terms of responsibility for carrying out international obligations. We confirm all of our obligations with regard to the bilateral and multilateral accords in the sphere of arms limitation and disarmament which were signed by the Soviet Union and are in operation at the current time.

The Russian leadership confirms its adherence to the course of radical reduction of nuclear weapons, guaranteeing the maximum security of nuclear weapons, and guaranteeing the security [of] all of the facilities connected with the development, production, and operation of such weapons.

Russia is proposing an initiative on the creation of an international agency to ensure the reduction of nuclear arms. During the subsequent stages this agency could gradually take under its control the whole nuclear cycle from the mining of uranium and the production of deuterium and tritium, to the storage of waste.

The measures we are taking in the disarmament sphere in no way undermine the defense capabilities of Russia or the CIS states. We are talking specifically about a reasonable, minimum sufficiency of nuclear and conventional arms.

This is our main principle in building the armed forces. Implementing it will make it possible to save considerable funds. These funds will be directed for civilian purposes for social issues and the implementation of reforms.

Conditions are prime today, making it possible to take a number of new, major steps in arms reduction. We are undertaking a proportion of these unilaterally, and others on a reciprocal basis.

We have done, and intend first and foremost to do the following: First, in the area of strategic offensive weapons: We will submit for ratification to the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation the treaty on strategic offensive weapons. The process of ratifying this treaty has also begun in the United States. I believe that the implementation of this vital document, including its approval by Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine, should be carried out as promptly as possible. Even before the treaty on strategic offensive weapons comes into force, Russia will take a whole range of major steps aimed at cutting the strategic arsenal. About 600 land and sea-based strategic ballistic missiles, or almost 1,250 nuclear warheads, have been removed from operational readiness. A total of 130 intercontinental ballistic missile launch silos have been destroyed or are being prepared for destruction. Six nuclear submarines have been prepared for the dismantling of their missile launchers. Programs for the development or modernization of several types of strategic offensive weapons have been halted. Strategic nuclear arms deployed on the territory of Ukraine are to be dismantled sooner than planned. The appropriate accords have been reached.

Let me stress that this is not a case of our unilateral disarmament. Parallel steps are being taken by the United States as a goodwill measure. Now, however, we can and need to advance significantly further along this path.

Recently the following decisions have been made: The production of TU-160 and TU-95Ms heavy bombers has ceased.

We are stopping the production of air-launched long-range cruise missiles of the existing types. We are prepared to renounce the creation of new types of such missiles on a reciprocal basis with the United States. The production of the existing types of sea-based long-range nuclear cruise missiles is ceasing. New types of such missiles will not be created.

At the same time we are prepared, on a reciprocal basis, to eliminate all existing sea-based long-range nuclear cruise missiles. We are renouncing the holding of exercises with the participation of large numbers of heavy bombers. This means that not more than 30 of them may be involved in one exercise. The number of atomic submarines with ballistic missiles—submarine-launched nuclear ballistic missiles—which are on combat patrol has been halved and will be reduced further. We are prepared to renounce altogether the practice of combat patrol with the aid of such submarines, on a reciprocal basis. Russia will reduce the number of strategic offensive weapons on operational readiness to the agreed number within a three-year period instead of seven years.

Thus, we will arrive four years earlier at the level that is envisaged by the relevant treaty. Given that there is mutual understanding with the United States, we could proceed in this

direction even faster. We are in favor of the strategic offensive weapons retained by the United States and Russia after the reduction not being aimed at Russian and US targets, respectively.

Important talks with leaders of Western countries are to take place in the forthcoming days. Proposals have been prepared on new, in-depth several-fold cuts in strategic offensive weapons, up to 2,000 to 2,500 strategic nuclear weapons on each of the sides. In doing so we hope that other nuclear powers like China, Britain, and France will join the process of real nuclear disarmament.

Second, tactical nuclear weapons: Major measures concerning their reduction have already been undertaken simultaneously with the United States.

During the recent period production has been stopped of nuclear warheads for land-based tactical missiles, and also production of nuclear artillery shells and nuclear mines. Stocks of such nuclear devices will be eliminated. Russia is eliminating one-third of sea-based tactical nuclear weapons and one-half of nuclear warheads for anti-aircraft missiles. Measures in this direction have already been taken. We also intend to halve stocks of air-launched tactical nuclear munitions. The remaining tactical air-launched nuclear armaments could, on a reciprocal basis with the United States, be removed from combat units of the frontline tactical air force and place[d] in centralized storage bases.

Third, antimissile defense and space: Russia confirms its adherence to the ABM treaty. It is an important factor in maintaining strategic stability in the world. We are ready to continue discussion without prejudice of the US proposal for limiting non-nuclear ABM systems.

Our principle is known: If it strengthens strategic stability in the world and Russia's security, we will support this approach. I also announce that Russia is ready, on the basis of reciprocity with the United States, to eliminate the existing anti-satellite systems and to work out an accord to ban completely the weapons which have been specially constructed to hit satellites. We are ready jointly to work out and subsequently to create and jointly operate a global system of defense in place of SDI.

Fourth, the testing of nuclear weapons and the manufacture of fissile materials for arms purposes: Russia is resolutely in favor of a ban on all nuclear arms testing. We are faithful to the annual moratorium on nuclear explosions announced in October 1991, and we hope that other nuclear powers will likewise refrain from carrying out nuclear testing. A climate of mutual restraint would facilitate the attainment of accords on not carrying out such tests altogether, possibly curtailing the number of tests gradually.

In the interests of resolving this task once and for all, we propose to the United States that bilateral talks on further limiting the testing of nuclear arms be resumed.

Russia intends to continue fulfillment of the program for ending the production of weapons grade plutonium. Industrial reactors for making weapons grade plutonium will be stopped before the year 2000, and several of them will be stopped in 1993 under an accelerated timetable.

We confirm the offer to the United States that agreement be reached on a controlled cessation of the production of fissionable materials for weapons.

Fifth, the nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the means of their delivery: Russia confirms its obligations under the nuclear nonproliferation treaty, including those as a depository. We are counting upon the treaty being joined as quickly as possible as non-nuclear states by Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine, and also other CIS member states. Russia states its full support for the activity of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and is in favor of the effectiveness of its guarantees being intensified.

We are taking additional steps to prevent our exports leading to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Work is now being conducted aimed at bringing Russia in line with the principles of an all-embracing IAEA guarantee as a condition of our peaceful nuclear exports. Russia, in principle, intends to join the international regime of nonproliferation of missiles and missile technology as an equal participant.

We support the efforts of the so-called Australia Group for control over chemical exports. The Russian Federation plans to adopt domestic legislation regulating the export from Russia of dual use materials, equipment and technology that could be used to create nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons or combat missiles. A government system to control such exports is being established. We are going to establish very close cooperation and coordination between all participating CIS states on these matters. Russia supports the guiding principles on the arms trade approved in London in October 1991.

Sixth, conventional weapons: A motion to ratify the treaty on conventional armed forces in Europe has been tabled in the Russian parliament. The other CIS member states whose territory is covered by this treaty likewise attach importance to its ratification. Russia reaffirms its intention—along with the other members of the Commonwealth—to cut the actual numbers of the former USSR armed forces by 700,000.

Russia attaches great significance to the talks currently under way in Vienna on personnel reductions and confidence-building measures, and also to the new talks on security and cooperation in Europe. The latter could become a standing pan-European forum for seeking ways of creating a collective, pan-European security system.

In cooperation with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, Russia will press to reach an accord with China at talks regarding cuts in armed forces and armaments in the border region.

A decision has been made not to hold major exercises in 1992 involving more than 13,000 men—and not just on the European part, but also on the Asiatic part of CIS territory.

We also hope that there is a possibility in the near future to sign a treaty on the open skies issue.

Seventh, chemical weapons: We are for the speediest possible conclusion, in 1992, of a global convention banning chemical weapons. This is essential in order to securely close the paths leading to the possession of chemical weapons, without detriment to the legitimate economic interests of the signatories to the convention. Russia adheres to the agreement with the United States on the non-production and elimination of chemical weapons, signed in 1990.

However, the timescale envisaged therein for the destruction of such weapons requires certain amendments. All of the chemical weapons of the former USSR are on the territory of Russia, who takes responsibility for their destruction. We are preparing an appropriate state program. We are open for cooperation in this matter with the United States and other interested countries.

Eighth, biological weapons: Russia favors the rigorous implementation of the 1972 convention banning biological weapons, and the creation of an appropriate mechanism on a multilateral basis for monitoring the implementation of measures for building confidence and openness. Considering that there is a lag in implementing the convention, I can now state that Russia is renouncing that section of provisos concerning the possibility of the retaliatory use of biological weapons. These provisos were made by the USSR under the Geneva Protocol of 1925 banning the use of chemical and bacteriological weapons in war.

Ninth, the defense budget: Russia will continue to make substantial reductions in its defense budget, imparting a social orientation to this area. In 1990 and 1991, defense expenditure was already reduced by 20 percent in terms of comparable prices, including a 30 percent reduction for purchases of weapons and equipment. In 1992, we intend to reduce military expenditure by another 10 percent in terms of 1991 prices. The volume of weapons purchases this year will be reduced by approximately half compared with last year.

Tenth, conversion: Russia welcomes international cooperation in the area of conversion of military production. Russia favors faster work in this regard. On our part, we will encourage this cooperation by creating a most favored treatment system and by establishing tax benefits for relevant joint projects.

Esteemed citizens of Russia: I have just set out a plan of action for the Russian Federation concerning the issues of arms reductions and disarmament. I hope it will meet with your support and with understanding on the part of all CIS peoples. I am convinced that it is fully in



keeping with the interests of our country and other states of the world. If it is possible to implement it, our life will not only become more calm and secure, but also qualitatively better.

Several hours ago US President Bush addressed the US people and proposed cuts of nuclear potential. We are constantly engaged in mutual consultations on these issues in preliminary terms. We are engaged in a dialogue on the practical implementation of this line and the initiatives that have been proposed. The closeness of the positions of both sides is noteworthy. Therein lies a guarantee of success on the path of reducing offensive nuclear arms.

Thank you for your attention.

## Appendix B

### Presidential Nuclear Initiatives Summary

	Bush 9/27/91	Gorbachev 10/5/91	Bush 1/28/92	Yeltsin 1/29/92
<b>Ground-launched nonstrategic nuclear weapons (NSNW)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ground-Launched Non-Strategic Nuclear Weapons (NSNW)</li> <li>• Call on Russia to do same, as well as eliminate other ground-launched NSNF (e.g. air defense and land mines)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminate nuclear artillery munitions, nuclear mines, and tactical rocket warheads</li> <li>• Consolidate nuclear air defense missile nuclear warheads in central sites and eliminate “a portion”</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Production ended of land-based tactical missiles, nuclear artillery, and nuclear mines</li> <li>• Eliminate one-half of air defense missile nuclear warheads</li> </ul>
<b>Sea-launched NSNW</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove nuclear weapons from surface ships and attack submarines. Withdraw nuclear warheads associated with land-based naval aircraft</li> <li>• Destroy “many.” Place remaining in central storage</li> <li>• Call on Soviets to remove all NSNF from ships and submarines, withdraw nuclear weapons for land-based naval aircraft, destroy many, and consolidate rest at central locations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove tactical nuclear weapons from surface ships and multiple-purpose submarines. Put in central storage, along with nuclear weapons on land-based naval aircraft. Eliminate “a portion”</li> <li>• Propose that the U.S. “eliminate fully, on the basis of reciprocity, all tactical nuclear weapons of naval forces”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• End production of long-range sea-launched cruise missiles (SLCMs). No new types of such missiles will be created</li> <li>• Prepared on a reciprocal basis to eliminate all existing long-range nuclear SLCMs</li> <li>• Eliminate one-third of sea-based tactical nuclear weapons</li> </ul>	

	<b>Bush 9/27/91</b>	<b>Gorbachev 10/5/91</b>	<b>Bush 1/28/92</b>	<b>Yeltsin 1/29/92</b>
<b>Air-launched NSNW</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cancel program to modernize tactical version of short-range attack missile (SRAM-T or TASM)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “On the basis of reciprocity, it would be possible to withdraw from all combat units on battlefield aviation all nuclear charges and place them in centralized storage sites”</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Halve stocks of air-launched tactical nuclear munitions. Remaining, on a reciprocal basis with the U.S., could be placed in central storage</li> </ul>

	Bush 9/27/91	Gorbachev 10/5/91	Bush 1/28/92	Yeltsin 1/29/92
<b>Intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove from alert all ICBMs to be eliminated under Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START). Accelerate elimination once START ratified. Call on Soviets to do the same</li> <li>• End development of mobile small ICBM and mobile Peacekeeper. Retain only small single-warhead ICBM program</li> <li>• Call on Soviets to limit ICBM modernization to one single warhead system, and end all programs for future MIRVed ICBMs</li> <li>• Propose U.S.-Soviet agreement to eliminate MIRVed ICBMs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove from alert 503 ICBMs, including 134 with multiple independently-targetable reentry vehicles (MIRVed)</li> <li>• End development of small mobile ICBM</li> <li>• Do not increase or modernize rail mobile ICBMs. Keep rail mobile ICBMs in permanent basing areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cancel small ICBM program</li> <li>• Stop new Peacekeeper production</li> </ul>	

	<b>Bush 9/27/91</b>	<b>Gorbachev 10/5/91</b>	<b>Bush 1/28/92</b>	<b>Yeltsin 1/29/92</b>
<b>Strategic Bombers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cancel program to replace nuclear short-range attack missile (SRAM)</li> <li>• End bomber alert. Ask Soviets to reciprocate by confining mobile ICBMs to garrison</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• End development of nuclear short-range missile for bombers</li> <li>• End bomber alert</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• End B-2 production at 20 bombers</li> <li>• End purchase of advanced cruise missiles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• End Backfire and Blackjack production</li> <li>• End production of current ALCMs</li> <li>• Prepared to renounce creation of new air-launched cruise missile (ALCM) types on reciprocal basis</li> <li>• End exercises with more than 30 bombers</li> </ul>
<b>Submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs)</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove from active duty 3 ballistic missile submarines SSBNs with 48 launchers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• End production of new SLBM warheads</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further reduce SSBN combat patrols</li> <li>• Prepared on reciprocal basis to end combat patrols</li> </ul>

	Bush 9/27/91	Gorbachev 10/5/91	Bush 1/28/92	Yeltsin 1/29/92
<b>Strategic General</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create U.S. Strategic Command</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce warheads below START limits, to 5,000 by end of reduction period. Would welcome U.S. reciprocity</li> <li>• Propose negotiating strategic cuts up to a factor of two after START entry-into-force</li> <li>• Create single operational command over all strategic nuclear weapons, including defensive</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet START deployed warhead level in 3 years</li> <li>• Propose strategic reductions, up to 3,000–2,500 on each side. Hope other nuclear powers will join process</li> </ul>

	Bush 9/27/91	Gorbachev 10/5/91	Bush 1/28/92	Yeltsin 1/29/92
<b>Other</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call on Soviets to join in immediate practical steps to allow limited ABM defenses</li> <li>• Explore U.S.-Soviet cooperation on safe warhead storage, transport, dismantlement, and destruction. Discuss existing arrangements and possible enhancements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call on all other nuclear powers to join measures against tactical nuclear weapons</li> <li>• Discuss U.S. ABM proposal</li> <li>• Propose examination of possible ground- and space-based joint early warning system</li> <li>• Unilateral nuclear test moratorium</li> <li>• Propose U.S.-Soviet agreement on ending weapons-grade fissile material production</li> <li>• Ready to dialogue on technology for nuclear warhead storage, transport, command and control, and enhancing security</li> <li>• Propose joint declaration by all nuclear powers on no-first-use</li> <li>• Reduce Soviet military by 700,000 men</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If Russia eliminates all MIRVed ICBMs, eliminate all Peacekeepers, download all Minutemen to one warhead, reduce SLBM warheads by about one-third, and convert “a substantial portion” of heavy bombers to primarily conventional (Note: this proposal led to START II)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirm responsibility for all Soviet arms control accords</li> <li>• Propose international agency to ensure nuclear reductions; would gradually take control of nuclear cycle</li> <li>• Continue discussion of U.S. proposal for limiting ABM</li> <li>• Ready jointly to create and operate a global defense system in place of SDI</li> <li>• Ready with U.S. to eliminate existing ASATs and to agree to ban dedicated ASATs</li> <li>• Resume U.S.-Soviet talks on further limiting nuclear testing</li> <li>• End production of weapons-grade plutonium by 2000. Confirm offer for agreement on end to production of fissile material for weapons</li> </ul>





## Bibliography

### Official Texts

Cheney, Dick, and Colin Powell. Press Conference, “Nuclear Weapons Reductions, September 28, 1991, Department of Defense,” C-Span video, at <[www.c-spanvideo.org/program/21624-1#](http://www.c-spanvideo.org/program/21624-1#)>.

George Bush Presidential Library and Museum. “Memorandum of Telephone Conversation: President Boris Yeltsin, December 23, 1991, 8:08 a.m.-8:31 a.m.,” at <[http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/r5research/pdfs/memcons\\_telcons/1991-12-23—Yeltsin.pdf](http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/r5research/pdfs/memcons_telcons/1991-12-23—Yeltsin.pdf)>.

\_\_\_\_\_. “Memorandum of Telephone Conversation: Prime Minister Jim Bolger of New Zealand, Saturday, September 28, 1991, 4:27-4:31 p.m.,” at <[http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/pdfs/memcons\\_telcons/1991-09-28—Bolger.pdf](http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/pdfs/memcons_telcons/1991-09-28—Bolger.pdf)>.

\_\_\_\_\_. “Memorandum of Telephone Conversation: Telcon with Boris Yeltsin, President of the Republic of Russia, September 27, 1991, 12:23-12:36 pm,” at <[http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/pdfs/memcons\\_telcons/1991-09-27—Yeltsin.pdf](http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/pdfs/memcons_telcons/1991-09-27—Yeltsin.pdf)>. This memorandum and the memorandum of Bush’s conversation with Kohl on the same date (see below) state that the two conversations occurred at the same time. It is unknown which is correct.

\_\_\_\_\_. “Memorandum of Telephone Conversation: Telcon with Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany, September 27, 1991, 12:23-12:36 pm,” at <[http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/pdfs/memcons\\_telcons/1991-09-27—Kohl.pdf](http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/pdfs/memcons_telcons/1991-09-27—Kohl.pdf)>.

\_\_\_\_\_. “Memorandum of Telephone Conversation: Telcon with Francois Mitterrand, President of France, September 27, 1991, 7:13-7:20 a.m.,” at <[http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/pdfs/memcons\\_telcons/1991-09-27—Mitterrand.pdf](http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/pdfs/memcons_telcons/1991-09-27—Mitterrand.pdf)>.

\_\_\_\_\_. “Memorandum of Telephone Conversation: Telcon with Mikhail Gorbachev, President of the Soviet Union, December 25, 1991, 10:03-10:25 a.m.,” at <[http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/pdfs/memcons\\_telcons/1991-12-25—Gorbachev.pdf](http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/pdfs/memcons_telcons/1991-12-25—Gorbachev.pdf)>.

- \_\_\_\_\_. “Memorandum of Telephone Conversation: Telcon with Mikhail Gorbachev, President of the USSR, September 27, 1991, 9:22-9:50 am,” at <[http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/pdfs/memcons\\_telcons/1991-09-27—Gorbachev.pdf](http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/pdfs/memcons_telcons/1991-09-27—Gorbachev.pdf)>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “Memorandum of Telephone Conversation: Telcon with Prime Minister John Major of the UK, September 27, 1991, 7:45-7:57 a.m.,” at <[http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/pdfs/memcons\\_telcons/1991-09-27—Major.pdf](http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/pdfs/memcons_telcons/1991-09-27—Major.pdf)>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “Memorandum of Telephone Conversation: Telcon with Secretary General of NATO, Manfred Woerner, September 27, 1991, 11:25-11:37 am,” at <[http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/pdfs/memcons\\_telcons/1991-09-27—Woerner.pdf](http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/pdfs/memcons_telcons/1991-09-27—Woerner.pdf)>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Public Papers – 1990 – May, “The President’s News Conference 1990-05-03,” at <[http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/public\\_papers.php?id=1842&year=1990&month=5](http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/public_papers.php?id=1842&year=1990&month=5)>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Public Papers – 1990 – August, “Remarks at the Aspen Institute symposium in Aspen, Colorado, 1990-08-02,” at <[http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/public\\_papers.php?id=2128&year=1990&month=8](http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/public_papers.php?id=2128&year=1990&month=8)>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Public Papers – 1991 – September, “Address to the Nation on Reducing United States and Soviet Nuclear Weapons, 1991-09-27,” at <[http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/public\\_papers.php?id=3438&year=1991&month=9](http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/public_papers.php?id=3438&year=1991&month=9)>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Public Papers – 1992 – January, “Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union, 1992-01-28,” at <[http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/public\\_papers.php?id=3886&year=1992&month+1](http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/public_papers.php?id=3886&year=1992&month+1)>. Gorbachev, Mikhail. “President of the Soviet Union Mikhail Gorbachev, televised announcement, October 5, 1991,” in Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, *SIPRI Yearbook 1992: World Armaments and Disarmament*. London: Oxford University Press, 1992, 87–88. NATO Ministerial Communiqué, Nuclear Planning Group, Taormina, Italy, October 17-18, 1991. *Final Communiqué*, at <[www.nato.int/doc/comm/49-95/c911018a.htm](http://www.nato.int/doc/comm/49-95/c911018a.htm)>. NATO-Official Text. *Declaration on a Transformed North Atlantic Alliance: Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council (“The London Declaration”)*, at <[www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-2690DF86-9DC09412/natoolive/](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-2690DF86-9DC09412/natoolive/)>

official\_texts\_23693.htm>. “Treaties 111<sup>th</sup> Congress (2009-2010) 111-5,” at <thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/Thomas>. U.S. Department of Defense. *Nuclear Posture Review Report*. Washington, DC: April 2010.

U.S. Department of State. *Fact Sheet: Increasing Transparency in the U.S. Nuclear Weapons Stockpile*. May 3, 2010.

Yeltsin, Boris. “President of the Russian Federation Boris Yeltsin, record of televised statement, January 29, 1992: Excerpts,” in Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, *SIPRI Yearbook 1992: World Armaments and Disarmament*. London: Oxford University Press, 1992, 89–92.

\_\_\_\_\_. “Statement on Disarmament by Russian Federation President Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin on 29 January,” Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report-Central Eurasia*, FBIS-SOV-92-019, January 29, 1992.

## Books and Articles

Bush, George, and Brent Scowcroft. *A World Transformed*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998.

Butler, Pat. *Rocky Flats Site History: Events Leading to the Creation of the Weapons Complex and Events at the Rocky Flats Site from the 1930s to Present*, n.d. [2002], at <rockyflats.apps.em.doe.gov/references/199-Rocky Flats History Thru 1-2002.pdf>.

Cheney, Dick, with Liz Cheney. *In My Time: A Personal and Political Memoir*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2011.

Command Historian’s Office, United States Strategic Command. *History of the United States Strategic Command, June 1, 1992–October 1, 2002*, Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska, January 2004, at <www.stratcom.mil/files/History.pdf>.

Fieldhouse, Richard, “Nuclear Weapon Developments and Unilateral Reduction Initiatives,” in Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, *SIPRI Yearbook 1992: World Armaments and Disarmament*. London: Oxford University Press, 1992, 65–84.

- Gates, Robert M. *From the Shadows: The Ultimate Insider's Story of Five Presidents and How They Won the Cold War*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996.
- Medalia, Jonathan. *Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty: Background and Current Developments*, Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, RL 35548, January 6, 2010.
- The Missile Plains: Frontline of America's Cold War*, Historic Resource Study, Minuteman Missile National Historic Site, South Dakota, Prepared for United States Department of the Interior National Park Service Midwest Regional office, 2003, at <[www.cr.nps.gov/history/online\\_books/mimi/hrst.htm](http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online_books/mimi/hrst.htm)>.
- Pifer, Steven. *NATO, Nuclear Weapons and Arms Control*. Brookings Arms Control Series Paper 7. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, July 2011.
- Pomper, Miles A., William Potter, and Nikolai Sokov. *Reducing and Regulating Tactical (Nonstrategic) Nuclear Weapons in Europe*. Monterey Institute: James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies, December 2009.
- Powell, Colin L., with Joseph E. Persico. *My American Journey*. New York: Random House, 1995.
- Scowcroft, Brent. Interview, November 12–13, 1999, George H.W. Bush Oral History Project, Miller Center, University of Virginia, at <[web1.millercenter.org/poh/transcripts/ohp\\_1999\\_111\\_scowcroft.pdf](http://web1.millercenter.org/poh/transcripts/ohp_1999_111_scowcroft.pdf)>.
- Shoumikhin, Andrei. “Evolving Russian Perspectives on Missile Defense: The Emerging Accommodation.” *Comparative Strategy* 21, no. 4 (2002), 311–336.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> General note on sources: Interviews with key participants in the Presidential Nuclear Initiatives decision and implementation processes were an invaluable part of the research for this case study. Where possible, the sources are identified by name. The offices noted are those that they held in the fall of 1991. Where the information was provided on a background basis, the source is simply noted as “interview,” with the date. Interviews were conducted with current and former U.S. Government officials who had been in the following agencies in 1991–1992: White House National Security Council (NSC) staff, Department of State, Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), Joint Staff, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA), and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).

<sup>2</sup> Lieutenant General Frank Klotz, USAF (Ret.), former Commander, 321<sup>st</sup> Operations Group, Missile Wing, Grand Forks Air Force Base, interview by author, September 1, 2011.

<sup>3</sup> Press Conference by Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell, U.S. Department of Defense, Washington, DC, September 28, 1991, C-Span video, “Nuclear Weapons Reductions, September 28, 1991, Department of Defense,” at <[www.c-spanvideo.org/program/21624-1#>](http://www.c-spanvideo.org/program/21624-1#>).

<sup>4</sup> See appendix A for the texts of the U.S., Soviet, and Russian PNI announcements.

<sup>5</sup> George Bush, Public Papers – 1990 – May, “The President’s News Conference 1990-05-03,” at <[bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/public\\_papers.php?id=1842&year=1990&month=5](http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/public_papers.php?id=1842&year=1990&month=5)>.

<sup>6</sup> NATO–Official Text, *Declaration on a Transformed North Atlantic Alliance: Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council* (“The London Declaration”), at <[www.nato.int/cps/en/SID/2690DF86-9DC09412/natoolive/official\\_texts\\_23693.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID/2690DF86-9DC09412/natoolive/official_texts_23693.htm)>.

<sup>7</sup> Franklin C. Miller, former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Nuclear Forces and Arms Control Policy, interview by author, January 30, 2012.

<sup>8</sup> Memoranda of telephone conversations at <[bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/pdfs/memcons\\_telcons/1991-08-19—Yeltsin.pdf](http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/pdfs/memcons_telcons/1991-08-19—Yeltsin.pdf)>, and <[bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/pdfs/memcons\\_telcons/1991-08-21—Gorbachev.pdf](http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/pdfs/memcons_telcons/1991-08-21—Gorbachev.pdf)>.

<sup>9</sup> James Timbie, Department of State, interview by author, August 31, 2011.

<sup>10</sup> Brent Scowcroft, interview, November 12–13, 1999, George H.W. Bush Oral History Project, Miller Center, University of Virginia, 77–78, at <[web1.millercenter.org/poh/transcripts/ohp\\_1999\\_1112\\_scowcroft.pdf](http://web1.millercenter.org/poh/transcripts/ohp_1999_1112_scowcroft.pdf)>.

<sup>11</sup> Major General Gary Curtin, USAF (Ret.), former Deputy Director for International Negotiations, Joint Staff J-5, interview by author, September 22, 2011; Douglas MacEachin, former Special Assistant to the Director of Central Intelligence for Arms Control and Chief, Arms Control Intelligence Staff, interview by author, September 22, 2011; and Miller interview, August 18, 2011.

<sup>12</sup> See George Bush and Brent Scowcroft, *A World Transformed* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998), 540–547; also, interview, September 19, 2011; and Miller interview, August 18, 2011.

<sup>13</sup> Attendees at the meeting are uncertain. Then-Deputy National Security Advisor Robert Gates described it as a session in the Oval Office of the “Gang of Eight,” but did not clearly identify the members. It appears likely that they were: the President; Scowcroft; White House Chief of Staff John

Sununu; Secretary of State James A. Baker III; Secretary Cheney; Chairman Powell; Acting Director of Central Intelligence Richard Kerr; and Gates. See Robert M. Gates, *From the Shadows: The Ultimate Insider's Story of Five Presidents and How They Won the Cold War* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996), 529.

<sup>14</sup> Bush and Scowcroft, 545.

<sup>15</sup> Gates, 530. See also: Bush and Scowcroft, 539–547; Colin L. Powell with Joseph E. Persico, *My American Journey* (New York: Random House, 1995), 541; Dick Cheney with Liz Cheney, *In My Time: A Personal and Political Memoir* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2011), 232–233.

<sup>16</sup> Interview, September 19, 2011.

<sup>17</sup> Miller interview, August 18, 2011.

<sup>18</sup> Powell, *My American Journey*, 540.

<sup>19</sup> Gates, 461–464; and interview, September 19, 2011.

<sup>20</sup> Bush and Scowcroft, 545.

<sup>21</sup> Miller interview, August 18, 2011.

<sup>22</sup> The theater version of the SRAM II was known as SRAM-T or Tactical Air-to-Surface Missile (TASM).

<sup>23</sup> Press Conference by Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell, U.S. Department of Defense, Washington, DC, September 28, 1991.

<sup>24</sup> Timbie interview, August 31, 2011; Douglas MacEachin, former Special Assistant to the Director of Central Intelligence for Arms Control and Chief, Arms Control Intelligence Staff, interview by author, October 3, 2011; and Ronald F. Lehman II, former Director, U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, interview by author, November 3, 2011.

<sup>25</sup> Curtin interview, September 22, 2011.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Miller interview, August 18, 2011. See also Press Conference by Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell, U.S. Department of Defense, Washington, DC, September 28, 1991.

<sup>29</sup> Miller interview, August 18, 2011.

<sup>30</sup> Press Conference by Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell, U.S. Department of Defense, Washington, DC, September 28, 1991.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Interview by author, September 19, 2011; and Miller interview, August 18, 2011.

<sup>33</sup> Interview by author, September 19, 2011; Curtin interview, September 22, 2011; MacEachin interview, October 3, 2011; Miller interview, August 18, 2011; and Timbie interview, August 31, 2011. See also Press Conference by Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell, U.S. Department of Defense, Washington, DC, September 28, 1991.

<sup>34</sup> Curtin interview, September 22, 2011.

<sup>35</sup> Timbie interview, August 31, 2011.

<sup>36</sup> Memoranda of Conversation on the telephone calls are at <[bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/memcons\\_telcons.php](http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/memcons_telcons.php)>. The memoranda on the calls to Mitterrand, Kohl, Gorbachev, Yeltsin, and

Woerner have been released in full. Only the memorandum on the Major telephone conversation has been redacted.

<sup>37</sup> Memoranda of Conversation at <[bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/memcons\\_telcons.php](http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/memcons_telcons.php)>.

Because parts of the memorandum of the Major conversation remain classified, the two issues that the Prime Minister raised have not been publicly identified. There are a few possibilities, including: U.S. support for the United Kingdom (UK) Trident ballistic missile-carrying submarine (SSBN) force; the future of TASM, which the UK hoped to deploy, but the PNI canceled; the implications for UK air-delivered nuclear weapons deployed in Germany; and/or the future of the UK nuclear-certified units for which the United States deployed tactical nuclear weapons.

<sup>38</sup> “Memorandum of Conversation: Telcon with Mikhail Gorbachev, President of the USSR, September 27, 1991, 9:22-9:50 a.m.,” at <[bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/memcons\\_telcons/1991-09-27—Gorbachev.pdf](http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/memcons_telcons/1991-09-27—Gorbachev.pdf)>.

<sup>39</sup> See appendix A. All quotations in this paper from the Bush speeches of September 27, 1991, and January 28, 1992, the Gorbachev speech of October 5, 1991, and the Yeltsin speech of January 29, 1992, are from the texts at appendix A.

<sup>40</sup> See appendix B for a chart summarizing the U.S. and Soviet/Russian PNI commitments in 1991–1992.

<sup>41</sup> The numbers of ground-launched weapons to be withdrawn and destroyed were provided by Secretary Cheney and Chairman Powell in their September 28, 1991, press conference. They also specified that three types of nuclear artillery warheads were involved: W-33 8”; W-79 8”; and W-48 155 mm. Press Conference by Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell, U.S. Department of Defense, Washington, DC, September 28, 1991.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Over time, the capability to redeploy TLAM-N deteriorated, until the Department of Defense decided in the April 2010 Nuclear Posture Review to retire the system. U.S. Department of Defense, *Nuclear Posture Review Report*, April 2010, 28.

<sup>44</sup> NATO Ministerial Communiqué: Nuclear Planning Group, Taormina, Italy, October 17–18, 1991, *Final Communiqué*, at <[www.nato.int/doc/comm/49-95/c911018a.htm](http://www.nato.int/doc/comm/49-95/c911018a.htm)>.

<sup>45</sup> Richard Fieldhouse, “Nuclear weapon developments and unilateral reduction initiatives,” in Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, *SIPRI Yearbook 1992: World Armaments and Disarmament* (London: Oxford University Press, 1992), 65.

<sup>46</sup> Klotz interview, September 1, 2011. The dealerting process was a simple and speedy one, involving removal of the physical code units from each Minuteman II Launch Control Facility (LCF). That took about 1 hour at each LCF, and could be done simultaneously at several of the 15 Minuteman II LCFs. This action (known as “dissipating launch codes”) meant that the missiles could no longer launch. No funds were saved, because missile crews still had to be on duty at each LCF as long as any of its silos retained missiles and warheads. Although the dealerting process was readily reversible, that never happened. No Minuteman II missiles were returned to alert status before the entire force was eliminated under the START Treaty. Instead, the Air Force began in late 1991 to implement the much more time-consuming deactivation process of removing the Minuteman II warheads and missiles. Minuteman II system elimination was completed in 1997, which was 4 years before the end of the 7-year

START Treaty reduction period. *The Missile Plains: Frontline of America's Cold War*, Historic Resource Study, Minuteman Missile National Historic Site, South Dakota, Prepared for United States Department of the Interior National Park Service Midwest Regional office, 2003, at <[www.cr.nps.gov/history/online\\_books/mimi/hrst.htm](http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online_books/mimi/hrst.htm)>.

<sup>47</sup> Command Historian's Office, United States Strategic Command, *History of the United States Strategic Command, June 1, 1992–October 1, 2002*, January 2004, 14–17.

<sup>48</sup> Miller interview, January 30, 2012.

<sup>49</sup> U.S.-Soviet meetings in fall 1991 on nuclear safety and security issues were disappointing, with the Soviet side reluctant to discuss its practices. However, in the next several years, these issues formed central elements of the Nunn-Lugar initiative that entered into law in December 1991. The Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Program included important work between the United States and Russia in nuclear storage and transport security, as well as on the denuclearization of Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan, and facilitation of Russian warhead dismantlement.

<sup>50</sup> See for example Andrei Shoumikhin, "Evolving Russian Perspectives on Missile Defense: The Emerging Accommodation," *Comparative Strategy*, vol. 21 (2002), 311–336.

<sup>51</sup> MacEachin interview, October 3, 2011.

<sup>52</sup> See Miles A. Pomper, William Potter, and Nikolai Sokov, *Reducing and Regulating Tactical (Nonstrategic) Nuclear Weapons in Europe* (Monterey Institute, James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies, December 2009), 9. See also Steven Pifer, *NATO, Nuclear Weapons and Arms Control*, Brookings Arms Control Series Paper 7 (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, July 2011), 14.

<sup>53</sup> Over the years, concerns have been expressed by several observers that Russia has repeatedly violated the moratorium by conducting low-yield nuclear tests at its Novaya Zemlya test site. However, those allegations have not been publicly proven or acknowledged. See for example, Jonathan Medalia, *Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty: Background and Current Developments*, Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, RL 35548, January 6, 2010, 5.

<sup>54</sup> "Memorandum of Telephone Conversation: Telcon with Mikhail Gorbachev, President of the USSR, September 27, 1991, 9:22-9:50 am," at <[http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/pdfs/memcons\\_telcons/1991-09-27—Gorbachev.pdf](http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/pdfs/memcons_telcons/1991-09-27—Gorbachev.pdf)>. The George H.W. Bush administration did not take the initiative on a nuclear-testing moratorium. Instead, the Congress imposed one in September 1992, under the Hatfield-Exon-Mitchell amendment to the Energy and Water Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 1993. Although the administration opposed the amendment, the President did not veto the bill. The last U.S. nuclear weapons test to date, a Los Alamos National Laboratory test codenamed Divider, was conducted on September 23, 1992.

<sup>55</sup> "The President: There are several points that I would like to make. I could not and would not lock British forces into the old argument that they have to be included in our proposals. We will support the difference in these forces." "Memorandum of Telephone Conversation: Telcon with Prime Minister John Major of the UK, September 27, 1991, 7:45-7:57 a.m.," at <[http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/pdfs/memcons\\_telcons/1991-09-27—Major.pdf](http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/pdfs/memcons_telcons/1991-09-27—Major.pdf)>.

"The President: My first point...is we don't want to cause any problem for French nuclear forces. French forces, and their modernization, are separate from what we're proposing." "Memorandum of Telephone Conversation: Telcon with Francois Mitterrand, President of France, September 27, 1991, 7:13-7:20



a.m.,” at <[http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/pdfs/memcons\\_telcons/1991-09-27—Mitterrand.pdf](http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/pdfs/memcons_telcons/1991-09-27—Mitterrand.pdf)>.

<sup>56</sup> “...we express our readiness to enter into a substantive dialogue with the United States on the development of safe and ecologically sound technologies for the storing and transportation of nuclear warheads, methods of recycling [i.e., dismantling] nuclear weapons devices, and enhancing nuclear security.”

<sup>57</sup> MacEachin interview, October 3, 2011.

<sup>58</sup> The Alma-Ata Declaration was signed by Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. The government of Kazakhstan changed the name of Alma-Ata to Almaty in 1993.

<sup>59</sup> The W-88 decision made a virtue out of necessity. The warhead was produced at the Rocky Flats plutonium processing plant in Colorado. The Federal Bureau of Investigation and Environmental Protection Agency raided the facility in June 1989 for environmental violations, and nuclear weapons production there ceased in November 1989. It never resumed. See Pat Butler, *Rocky Flats Site History: Events Leading to the Creation of the Weapons Complex and Events at the Rocky Flats Site from the 1930s to Present*, n.d. [2002], at <[rockyflats.apps.em.doe.gov/references/199-Rocky Flats History Thru 1-2002.pdf](http://rockyflats.apps.em.doe.gov/references/199-Rocky%20Flats%20History%20Thru%201-2002.pdf)>, 16–18.

<sup>60</sup> In a somewhat confusing statement, Yeltsin noted that production of all those systems had ended “during the recent period.” It would make little sense for production to have continued after Gorbachev’s October 5 announcement—if the Soviet Union intended from the outset to fulfill his commitments. One positive interpretation is that the “recent period” could mean immediately after October 5, even though that was almost 4 months before Yeltsin’s speech.

<sup>61</sup> We say “appeared” because the Gorbachev and Yeltsin PNI speeches did not present the information in identical ways. Yeltsin claimed that: about 600 ICBMs and SLBMs, with almost 1,250 warheads, had been taken off alert; 130 ICBM silos had been destroyed or were being prepared for destruction; and 6 SSBNs had been prepared for SLBM launcher dismantlement.

<sup>62</sup> In 1997, Presidents Clinton and Yeltsin agreed that the 2,000–2,500 deployed strategic warhead limit would be part of a START III Treaty. START III was never fully negotiated, but subsequent U.S.-Russian strategic arms reduction agreements featured even lower levels: 1,700–2,200 under the 2002 Moscow Treaty; and 1,550 under the 2010 New START Treaty.

<sup>63</sup> “Proposals have been prepared on new, in-depth severalfold cuts in strategic offensive weapons, up to 2,000 to 2,500 strategic nuclear weapons on each of the sides. In doing so we hope that other nuclear powers like China, Britain, and France will join the process of real nuclear disarmament.”

<sup>64</sup> See U.S. Department of State, *Fact Sheet: Increasing Transparency in the U.S. Nuclear Weapons Stockpile*, May 3, 2010. The yearly stockpile totals do not include retired warheads awaiting dismantlement. Therefore, many of the warheads noted as “reduced” had been moved from the active/inactive stockpile to the dismantlement queue. Actual dismantlement took considerably longer.

<sup>65</sup> See Pomper, Potter, and Sokov, 2; also, Timbie interview, August 31, 2011.

<sup>66</sup> “Treaties—111th Congress (2009–2010) 111-5,” at <[thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/Thomas](http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/Thomas)>.

<sup>67</sup> Text at <[bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/public\\_papers](http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/public_papers)>.

<sup>68</sup> Text in Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, *SIPRI Yearbook 1992*, 87–88.

<sup>69</sup> Sentence included in official text, but not delivered in televised speech.

<sup>70</sup>Text at <[bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/public\\_papers](http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/public_papers)>.

<sup>71</sup>Text in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report-Central Eurasia*, FBIS-SOV-92-019, January 29, 1992. Also, major excerpts are available in Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, *SIPRI Yearbook* 1992, 89–92.

## About the Author

*Dr. Susan J. Koch* is an independent consultant specializing in policy issues regarding arms reduction and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. She is a Distinguished Research Fellow in the Center for the Study of Weapons of Mass Destruction at the National Defense University, and an associate faculty member in the Defense and Strategic Studies Department at Missouri State University. She also serves on the Department of Defense (DOD) Threat Reduction Advisory Committee and the Combating Weapons of Mass Destruction Task Force of the U.S. Strategic Command Strategic Advisory Group. From 1982 until 2007, Dr. Koch held a series of senior positions on the White House National Security Council Staff, Office of the Secretary of Defense, Department of State, and U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency focused on nonproliferation and arms reduction policy. Dr. Koch began her government career in the Directorate of Intelligence at the Central Intelligence Agency, studying West European political issues.

Dr. Koch has received the Presidential Distinguished Executive Award, Presidential Meritorious Executive Award, DOD Distinguished Civilian Service Medal (five times), Arms Control and Disarmament Agency Distinguished Honor Award, and Department of State Meritorious Honor Award. Before her government service, she taught international and comparative politics at Mount Holyoke College and the University of Connecticut. Dr. Koch received a B.A. from Mount Holyoke College and an M.A. and Ph.D. in political science from Harvard University.







**Center for the Study of Weapons of Mass Destruction**

Case Study Series

**Case Study 1**

*President Nixon's Decision to Renounce the U.S. Offensive Biological Weapons Program*

by Jonathan B. Tucker and Erin R. Mahan

October 2009

**Case Study 2**

*U.S. Withdrawal from the Antiballistic Missile Treaty*

by Lynn F. Rusten

January 2010

**Case Study 3**

*The Origins of Nunn-Lugar and Cooperative Threat Reduction*

by Paul I. Bernstein and Jason D. Wood

April 2010

**Case Study 4**

*U.S. Ratification of the Chemical Weapons Convention*

by Jonathan B. Tucker

December 2011

For additional information, including requests for publications and instructor's notes, please contact the Center directly at [WMDWebmaster@ndu.edu](mailto:WMDWebmaster@ndu.edu) or (202) 685-4234 or visit the Center

Web site at [www.ndu.edu/wmdcenter](http://www.ndu.edu/wmdcenter).

