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United States Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20580
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SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

March 23, 1983

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MEMORANDUM FOR MR. WILLIAM P. CLARK
THE WHITE HOUSE

SUBJECT: Andropov's Message on MBFR

Attached is the text of an "oral message" from Andropov in response to the President's message on MBFR. Ambassador Dobrynin delivered it to the Secretary late today.

L. Paul Bremer
L. Paul Bremer, Jr.
Executive Secretary

Attachment:
As stated

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8/8 8308640
Oral message
From - Disregard to
Secretary Shultz
From the 2/25/74

I have received your oral message, Mr. President, conveyed through the U.S. representative at the Vienna negotiations.

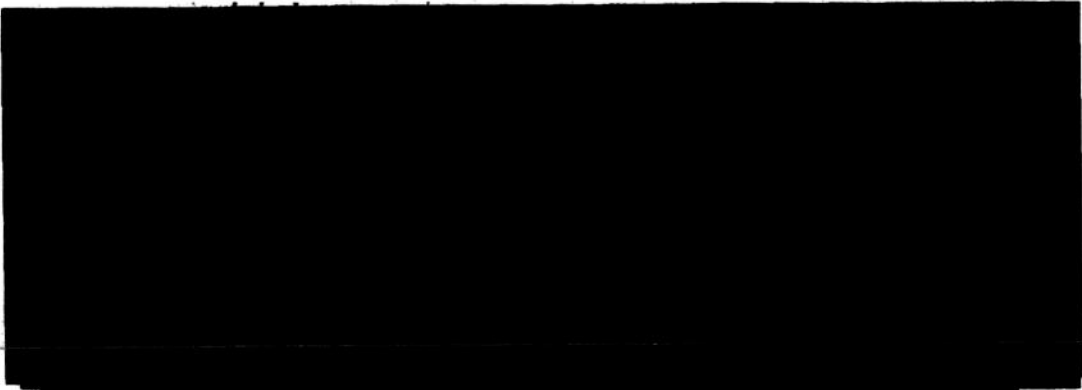
As I understand it, the meaning of that message is that the United States now wishes to search for agreement at those talks. If that is so and if, as your representative said, the American side had received with interest our new proposals recently put forward at the negotiations, then we would like to hope that it would be possible to come to agreement quickly enough.

Our approach is simple and clear: to put an end to interminable discussions and to agree in practice to carry out the reduction of the NATO and Warsaw Treaty armed forces to equal collective levels: no more than 900 thousand troops on each side, including no more than 700 thousand troops in the ground forces. In other words, the emphasis is being shifted from the specific volumes of the reductions to the final result of those reductions, which is precisely what really matters.

On this basis our delegation in Vienna is prepared to work out the necessary concrete details.

Our two countries can play a leading role in this entire endeavor by becoming the first ones to reduce their troops on a mutual example basis. It would undoubtedly become a convincing practical manifestation by them of their intention to lower the level of the military confrontation in Europe and to ensure by deeds the success of the Vienna negotiations.

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