

## U.S.S.R. offers bold disarmament plan

**A**n Oct. 5 speech by Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev stunned official Washington with two unexpected announcements. First, Brezhnev revealed that the U.S.S.R. would unilaterally withdraw 20,000 troops and 1,000 tanks from East Germany during the next year. Second, Brezhnev not only attacked the NATO missile-deployment plan, but indicated that Moscow was prepared to negotiate on the entire issue of medium-range nuclear weapons in Europe, possibly leading to cutbacks in the Soviet force.

Brezhnev's speech had been anticipated in the U.S. as the authoritative Soviet response to the plan to send American medium-range nuclear missiles to Western Europe. That plan is now under debate in Western Europe.

Brezhnev's initiatives were less of a surprise in Western European capitals, especially Bonn. On Oct. 4, the Social Democratic Party's arms expert Pawelczyk, just returned from discussions on disarmament in Moscow, reported that high-ranking Soviet officials there had indicated readiness to discuss and negotiate about the SS-20—the Russian medium-range rocket to which the new NATO missiles are supposed to be a response. These Soviet hints, confirmed and amplified by Brezhnev's proposals, dovetailed with West German Defense Minister Apel's insistence that arms negotiations with the Soviets should precede deployment of the NATO weapons and provide the basis for deciding for or against them.

A top Soviet expert on West Germany has revealed that Moscow shares Bonn's hinting that SALT III would be the most opportune forum for these negotiations, but that if that proves impossible (for instance, with the further delay of SALT II's ratification), the question could be addressed even sooner and in other locations. The official, Central Committee Secretary Valentin Falin, who was Soviet ambassador to Bonn until recently, told the *Koelner Stadt-Anzeiger* Sept. 22 that direct talks on nuclear missiles in Europe could begin before SALT II is ratified.

Brezhnev's offers, because they were unexpected, have drawn a great deal of attention. But, the tough warning tone he adopted in describing the consequences if the NATO deployment goes ahead without talks is equally important. The strong words of his speech

(excerpted below) were seconded by the even stronger terms of his communiqué with the East German leaders, which forecast that Europe would "plunge into a new dangerous round of the arms race."

Brezhnev evoked the image of destruction in war of countries basing the missiles, while offering a non-aggression pledge to those which stayed free of them. Falin, too, called on Bonn, particularly, to accept a special responsibility for advancing arms control, appealing to West Germany's interest in "enhancing its flexibility for action" outside the scope of current United States policies which through "political maneuvers in Europe and Japan, in the Indian Ocean and in the Middle East, as well as with China" seek to "abolish the balance just agreed under SALT II."

—Rachel Douglas

## Brezhnev makes an offer

*On Oct. 5, Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev addressed an East Berlin audience on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the German Democratic Republic. The following are excerpts.*

We cannot fail to see real facts: the supporters of the arms race use any pretexts, even nonexistent, fabricated ones, in order to heat up the situation and whip up military preparations. As for Europe, they are planning to plant a mine beneath the edifice of peace, under its very foundation.

The dangerous plans for the deployment of new types of American nuclear missile weapons on the territory of Western Europe ... give cause for serious concern. ... Implementation of these designs would essentially alter the strategic situation on the continent. Their aim is to upset the balance of forces that has taken shape in Europe and to try to ensure military superiority for the NATO bloc.

As for military superiority—we shall see. In such an event, the socialist countries would of course not watch indifferently the efforts of the NATO militarists. We would have to take the necessary extra steps to strengthen our security. There would be no other way out remaining to us.

It is no secret that the Federal Republic of Germany, alongside the U.S., is assigned not the smallest part in the preparation of these dangerous plans. ... It is not hard to see what consequences the Federal Republic would have in store for itself if these new weapons were put to use by their owners one day. ...

As Chairman of the Defense Council of the U.S.S.R. I am most definitely stating that the number of medium-range carriers of nuclear arms on the territory of the

European part of the Soviet Union has not been increased by a single missile, by a single plane during the past 10 years.

I will say more. We are prepared to reduce the number of medium-range nuclear means deployed in Western areas of the Soviet Union as compared to the present level but, of course, only in the event no additional medium-range nuclear means are deployed in Western Europe.

I also want to confirm solemnly that the Soviet Union will never use nuclear arms against those states that renounce the production and acquisition of such arms and do not have them on their territory.

Motivated by a sincere desire to take the years of efforts to achieve military detente in Europe out of an impasse to show an example of transition from words to real deeds, we have decided, in agreement with the leadership of the German Democratic Republic and after consultations with other member countries of the Warsaw Treaty, to unilaterally reduce the number of Soviet troops in Central Europe. Up to 20,000 Soviet servicemen, a thousand tanks and also a certain amount of other military hardware will be withdrawn from the territory of the German Democratic Republic over the next 12 months....

Lying ahead, as is known, are ... important talks on SALT-III. We are for commencing them immediately after the SALT-II Treaty enters into force. Within the framework of these talks we agree to discuss the possibilities of limiting not only intercontinental but also other types of armaments...."

## Confidence building

Soviet President Brezhnev's disarmament proposal to Europe also included the following "confidence building" measures to be taken by both sides:

- To announce maneuvers of land forces earlier than has been done previously and to announce maneuvers of more than 20,000 men in advance.
- To forbid troop exercises of more than 40-50,000 men.
- To prevent naval and air maneuvers in the vicinity of other CSCE countries (all of Europe, plus the United States and Canada) which belong to the opposite military bloc.
- To preannounce not only military exercises, but troop movements of more than 20,000 men.

## U.S., Britain respond

*Within days of Soviet President Brezhnev's announcement, the response came pouring out of the U.S. and Great Britain. Here is a selection.*

### **Carter: 'effort to disarm our allies'**

**From President Carter's press conference Oct. 9:**

Our allies and we are carefully assessing the significance of President Brezhnev's statement. However I'd like to point out that what he's offering, in effect, is to continue their own rate of modernization as it has been, provided we don't modernize at all.

They have had actual reduction in launchers the last few years. They've been replacing their old SS-4's and SS-5's with the SS-20, not on a one-for-one basis; the old missiles only had one warhead. The SS-20 had a much greater range.... They have also replaced all older airplanes with the Backfire bomber. So it's not quite as constructive a proposal as at first blush it seems to be. I think it's an effort designed to disarm the willingness or eagerness of our allies adequately to defend themselves. In my judgment the decision ought to be made to modernize the Western allies'

military strength and then negotiate with a full commitment and determination mutually to lower armaments on both sides....

I might point out that Chancellor Schmidt said, I believe yesterday or the day before, that a prerequisite to a decision by our NATO allies to take these steps, which he considers to be vital for the security of NATO, is the passage of SALT II.

### **Kissinger: 'split the allies'**

**Washington Post, Oct. 9, reporting a speech by former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger at the American Bankers Association convention in New Orleans: ...** Citing a speech last week in Berlin by Soviet President Leonid I. Brezhnev, Kissinger warned that it was "designed to split our allies from the United States."...

Kissinger said a "new reality" of the 1980s will be reduced strength of American military forces compared with the Soviet Union. For this reason, he said, the strategic arms limitation treaty must be coupled with "significant increases" in U.S. military spending.

### **NATO: no 'freeze' in Brezhnev's favor**

**The Financial Times, Oct. 8: ...** The NATO allies yesterday made it plain they would reject any Soviet