

Conference with Politburo Members, March 21, 1988

On the meeting with American Senators and scientists in Moscow

Gorbachev: This may have been one of the most substantial talks we've had recently. They are all supporters of Reagan; all the more so, their sentiments show the realistic processes taking place in America. Reagan feels this, and we should see it. Communication with them will always be difficult. An element of struggle will always be there. But we should always see the most important—the opportunity. Opportunity is there, and it is growing.

Yazov and Carlucci's (US Minister of Defense) meeting was very important, probably for the first time in history. What did we see? With all the peculiarities that reflect the specificity of American political processes, particularly the fact that the American minister started every conversation with the subject of human rights, the conversation was substantial and very frank; at times even surprisingly frank and at the same time professional. This is a sign of the times, comrades. We are all people, not animals. Here as well, the human factor is playing a role. Just as in the relations with the President.

[Source: Archive of the Gorbachev Foundation, Moscow, Notes of Anatoly Chernyaev.
Translated by Anna Melyakova for the National Security Archive]