

The major bargaining chip we have with the Soviets is the Safeguard program. Our major concern is with the momentum of their offensive buildup program. We have bargained Safeguard down to a marginal two sites. We have not yet begun to discuss their offense program seriously. Out of the first 15 plenary and mini-plenary sessions, the U. S. discussed ABMs 4 times and offenses 3 times. The Soviets discussed ABMs 15 times and offenses never except to reject limitations on SLEMs.

I conclude that we must forthwith inform the Soviets that the acceptability of our proposed ABM agreement is completely dependent upon their acceptance of our proposed offense limits and that we cannot proceed further to negotiate on defenses until we have heard their response to our offensive proposal and have determined that our positions are close on that subject. Only after we have determined that an acceptable offense limitation is achievable, will we return to negotiation of a compatible ABM agreement.

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