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TO: Steering Group
FROM: SSD Working Group *WLR*
SUBJECT: Possible Ideas for Assistance on SSD

NO OBJECTION TO FULL
RELEASE

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At the suggestion of the NSC staff, the SSD Working Group has had an initial discussion of possible ideas for aid to the former USSR for safety, security, and dismantlement (SSD). By way of background, Nunn-Lugar authorizes aid to: "1) destroy nuclear weapons, chemical weapons, and other weapons, 2) transport, store, disable, and safeguard weapons in connection with their destruction, and 3) establish verifiable safeguards against the proliferation of such weapons."

Following is an edited summary of our discussion.

- o The U.S. does not yet know enough about possible needs in the former USSR to address specific forms of aid. At the next SSD meeting, in Moscow, we hope to gain more information. If the Soviets are prepared to address the questions posed by the U.S., our team is ready to depart Washington for Moscow on December 18.
- o Three possible broad categories of assistance are: 1) equipment and technical assistance, 2) infrastructure and operational support, and 3) personnel and training.
- o Assistance might serve six kinds of activities: 1) disablement, 2) dismantlement, 3) transport, 4) storage, 5) transparency measures, and 6) emergency response.
- o Depending on their involvement and oversight roles, republic officials might want certain U.S. technical information and assistance that would not be needed by experienced officials from the MoD and MAPI.
- o The conditions in Nunn-Lugar for providing assistance (e.g., recipient is in compliance with all arms control accords) could pose problems. No decision has been made at this point whether any assistance to be rendered would come under Nunn-Lugar, or other, authorities.

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o Some aid could flow through U.S. companies, labs, and other entities (Nunn-Lugar calls on us, to the extent feasible, to draw on U.S. technology and technicians), and other aid might be provided directly to entities in the former USSR. An accounting -- and perhaps other confirmation, such as visibility into the results -- of how aid is spent will be needed.

o Chemical weapons authorities in the former USSR probably have a better idea today of how to use U.S. assistance (e.g., to build incinerators) than do nuclear weapons authorities.

o In general, the U.S. role should focus on accelerating existing Soviet plans, and we should not seek to impose our own ideas everywhere, although we do want to urge rapid disablement.

o Certain objectives in safety, security, transparency, and environment might in some cases involve tradeoffs against the goal of expeditious dismantlement.

Transparency

o We do not yet know what transparency will be desired by republics (and the center or commonwealth), and by ourselves. We do not want to plant the seed that republics need transparency measures that unduly slow disablement and dismantlement. (Note Nunn-Lugar requires that, as a condition of offering aid, the President certify that the recipient is committed to "facilitating United States verification of weapons destruction" carried out with U.S. assistance under the Nunn-Lugar authority.)

o Equipment and technical assistance might help republics to be sure that weapons are reliably disabled in their territories, removed for dismantlement, and eventually dismantled.

o Involving the IAEA or other international monitoring entities may be a question at some point. IAEA is financially suffering and IAEA "blue hats" would have to be kept away from certain sensitive information, e.g., nuclear design. The question of involvement by other nuclear states might also be raised in some quarters.

Equipment and Technical Assistance

o Providing equipment (e.g., building additional gravel gerties) would be politically visible and could facilitate U.S. oversight over the quality and purposes for which assistance is being used.

o U.S. practical assistance in disabling and dismantlement procedures would require details of weapons designs and life-cycle history that those now in charge of Soviet nuclear weapons would be loathe to provide.

o We might build transport containers that meet IAEA standards, or sponsor their construction in the USSR. But we do not want to urge unnecessary containers whose construction might unduly delay weapons movement to more secure storage and dismantlement facilities.

o As we formulate assistance programs, it might be useful to hire some Soviet technical consultants, either as individuals or as representatives of official authorities, to help us learn more about the Soviet weapons complex and SSD practices. This might also ease a little of the potential problem of "brain drain" to proliferating states.

o Assistance in environmental issues associated with dismantlement may not be a high priority for the U.S., unless pits are recycled or subjected to other operations (which requires complex plutonium handling operations). We do not want to inject excess environmental steps that could unduly slow dismantlement.

Infrastructure and Operational Support

o Money may be needed to assure continued operation of the parts of the Soviet nuclear weapons complex that will implement SSD efforts. This might involve paying for or otherwise furnishing salaries, fuel and power, local security, and even food, medicine, and other living supplies and infrastructure (most Soviet facilities are remotely located). Other U.S. assistance programs (e.g., food) may address some of these issues.

o In Washington recently, MAPI Deputy Minister Mikhaylov claimed that new storage for materials recovered from dismantled weapons was needed. But construction of new buildings, such as for storage, may not be necessary since the Soviets already have a vast nuclear complex.

o We might, however, need to provide assistance, both equipment and technical advice, for better safety and physical security. Also, assistance might be useful on a long-term basis to support safe and secure storage of weapons awaiting dismantlement, as well as weapons materials removed in dismantlement.

o It may be important to support reliable monitoring through technical means, such as systems for access denial, theft detection, and weapons tracking (e.g., tags, beacons, communications equipment for transport systems).

o Assistance for more railcars, and for excavation equipment at central depots, might be needed.

o Kevlar blankets might be needed to protect weapons being moved from small arms fire.

o Fire protection equipment might be needed for handling facilities.

o Perhaps U.S. support for military airlift of weapons would be useful, but this would require detailed understanding of serious safety and security implications.

o Assistance in upgrading accounting systems for reliable inventory of weapons might be needed.

o Augmenting emergency response capabilities or transport might be useful considering the increased weapons movements which will be taking place. Republics may be particularly interested.

Personnel and Education

o Aid might be needed to train more dismantlement workers or others.

o Another possibility is to provide opportunities for trained personnel for other kinds of work outside the nuclear weapons area, to avert their marketing themselves to potential third world proliferators. Engineers could pose as much or more of a proliferation threat than physicists since much of the science of nuclear weapons is in the open literature, but engineering and nuclear weapons technology is much less widely known.

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