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ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

28 September 1983



INTERNATIONAL
SECURITY POLICY

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL
Authority: EO 13526
Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHS
Date: APR 20 2018

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: NSPG Meeting on START, Thursday, 29 September at 2:00 p.m.

(S) The purpose of this NSPG meeting is to discuss whether we should make any changes to our START position during round V, which begins 6 October, and, if so, what they should be. The pressure for changes in our position has come primarily from the Department of State and ACDA and, to some extent, from Ambassador Rowny as well. In general, OSD has argued that we should not change for change's sake and that the political benefits some see in relatively minor changes are either non-existent or not worth the risk of encouraging the Soviets to remain intransigent in the belief that, in the absence of concessions on their part, we will continue to "negotiate with ourselves." In some cases, however, we have been willing to agree to some changes, especially when we have been able to obtain interagency agreement that any changes in our position will be conditional on reciprocal Soviet flexibility.

(S) Of the proposed changes, two stand out in importance:

A. SLCM Limits. Ambassador Rowny (via a backchannel message at tab D) has suggested that we propose to the Soviets to ban all nuclear-armed SLCMs, regardless of range. (The Soviets originally proposed to ban all cruise missiles with a range over 600 km., but, in the last round modified their position to permit "long range" ALCMs if we would agree to ban "long range" SLCMs and GLCMs.) ACDA will support him, but State is leaning toward a compromise position whereby we would agree in principle to limit SLCMs in START but delay the tabling of any specific proposal. OSD and JCS have regarded this as a dangerous step, since, in our view, no-one has been able to identify a SLCM limitation which is both militarily significant and effectively verifiable. While it may be necessary in the "end game" to reach an agreement on SLCMs which will be unsatisfactory in one respect or another, we do not see any wisdom in making such a proposal now.

B. Sublimit of 2500 ICBM Warheads. State proposed eliminating or raising the 2500 sublimit on ICBM warheads as a way of responding to criticism from the Soviets and the Hill that our START proposal unduly forces the Soviets to "restructure" their strategic forces by requiring them to change their heavy emphasis on ICBMs. At the last round, the U. S. offered to drop all the "collateral constraints" on ballistic missile throw-weight (the 2500 sublimit on ICBM warheads, the 210 sublimit on medium and heavy ICBMs and the 110 sublimit on heavy ICBMs) in favor of direct limits on

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throw-weight. Since the Soviets have yet to respond to this offer, OSD believes it unwise to unilaterally offer to drop one of these constraints from its proposal.

In any event, we find unconvincing the argument that the 2500 sublimit is unnecessary due to the important constraints provided by the 210/110 limits on heavy and medium ICBMs, since, at the NSC meeting last June, State proposed eliminating these very limits on medium ICBMs and raising the heavy ICBM limit to 150. (It cannot be overemphasized that the same arguments that are now being used against the 2500 sublimit--i.e., that it "emasculates" the Soviet ICBM force, requires "unilateral" Soviet reductions, and unduly restricts Soviet force structuring flexibility--can and will be used against the 210/110 limits later on, especially since this move will not meet Soviet concerns.) Hence we found the original State proposal to be a significant step from solid ground to a slippery slope.

As presently written, the option of dropping the 2500 limit is conditioned on Soviet agreement to the 5000 ballistic missile RV limit and appropriate throw-weight limits. In this form, the move is not objectionable, although we doubt that this conditionality could, in fact, be maintained during the negotiations.

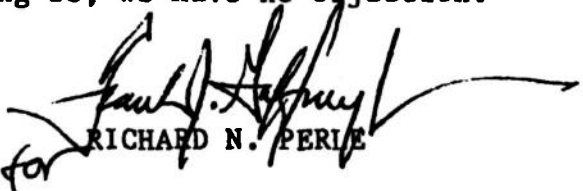
~~(S)~~ The other changes are minor:

A. Lower ALCM Limits. Our current position (limits of 400 heavy bombers, and 20 ALCMs per bomber) opens us to being attacked by the Soviets for permitting 8000 ALCMs and, hence, for not really being in favor of reductions after all. Since acceptable specific lower limits have not been identified, all agencies recommend that Amb. Rowny be given the flexibility, in the context of reciprocal Soviet flexibility, to explore ways of further limiting the size of ALCM forces.

B. ALCMs with Multiple Nuclear Warheads. In response to the Soviet proposal to ban "MIRVed" cruise missiles (taken from SALT II), all agencies recommend that we counter with a proposal to ban ALCMs with more than one nuclear warhead. The reason for re-phrasing the proposal is to ensure that we do not get caught up in discussions of cruise missiles with conventional submunitions. (There is no interagency agreement on whether ALCM limits should apply to all armed ALCMs or only to nuclear-armed ALCMs. OSD favors the nuclear-armed definition.)

C. Propose Destruction Procedures. ACDA believes it would be helpful to initiate discussion of procedures for dismantling or destroying excess strategic offensive arms. While OSD does not see the particular advantage in doing so, we have no objection.

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for RICHARD N. PERLE

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