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OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Through: The Under Secretary of Defense (Policy) *213 APR 1983*  
The Assistant Secretary of Defense (International Security Policy)

SUBJECT: START End-of-Round Report (Round Three) (U) --  
INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

*(S)* The third round of the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) ended in Geneva on March 31, 1983. The U.S. delegation tabled two major documents: the Basic Elements of an Agreement, which set forth in concrete form the key features of the START agreement we seek; and a draft agreement on confidence-building measures (CBMs), presenting in legal form the CBMs proposed by President Reagan in his earlier public initiatives. The Soviet delegation tabled a draft START treaty. The fourth round of START is scheduled to begin on June 8, 1983.

USSR 388.3

Status

*(S)* This round was the least productive to date. We saw virtually no progress, however defined. The Soviets were not prepared to do serious business and rebuffed our efforts to move forward. No new points of disagreement or potential agreement emerged. Each delegation remained at the debating stage, defending its own positions and attacking those of the other. After the equivalent of a year (i.e., three rounds), concrete negotiations on a START agreement can hardly be said to have begun.

U.S. Position

*(S)* The U.S. delegation continued to emphasize our central objectives: substantial reductions, stability, equality and effective verification. We also made several attempts, both substantive and procedural, to move the negotiations forward.

-- In tabling our Basic Elements, we fleshed out important elements of our position that the Soviets had earlier claimed we were trying to exclude from an agreement (i.e., a proposed ceiling of 400 heavy bombers and a proposed method for limiting air-launched cruise missiles).

-- In tabling our draft CBMs agreement, we included for now only those of our proposals which were consistent with CBMs previously proposed by the Soviet Union. We called for negotiations on a separate CBMs agreement to be concluded as promptly as possible.

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EXEMPT PER EO 13526 as amended  
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-- We renewed our earlier proposals to establish working groups on CBMs, definitions and data exchange. We also proposed a working group to elaborate a set of agreed joint principles.

-- We elaborated certain important details of our position, such as objective criteria for defining heavy bombers and a rationale for the concept of potential throw-weight.

### Soviet Position

(S) In contrast, the Soviet contribution this round was almost entirely negative. The Soviet delegation spent more time attacking the U.S. position than it did extolling its own. The Soviet tone was harsh, polemical and at times sarcastic. The Soviets criticized the entire U.S. position in the strongest terms we have heard to date. Even at our first meeting of the round, they claimed that the talks were stalemated and that the United States was solely to blame. Thereafter, they proceeded to assure a standstill by rebuffing every U.S. initiative.

-- Rather than giving us credit for our movement in specifying a heavy bomber ceiling and a method for limiting ALCMs, the Soviets gave our Basic Elements document the back of the hand -- substantively, on the ground that it contained nothing they did not know or had not assumed and, procedurally, on the ground that the document was too little, too late. Instead, they claimed, it was time to move to draft treaty language as they themselves were doing. In short, the Basic Elements document was stillborn.

-- The Soviets said our separate quota of 400 heavy bombers is unfair because it unduly restricts their freedom to mix and because it includes the Backfire, which they say they will never count as a heavy bomber. As for ALCMs, the Soviets argued that our proposed limits would legitimize huge ALCM deployments resulting in substantial increases in the total number of nuclear weapons, not reductions as we have argued. The Soviets continued to urge a ban on the deployment of all long-range cruise missiles, regardless of basing mode -- no doubt calculating that this position is a public relations asset which they would be foolish to abandon at present.

-- The Soviets spurned our efforts to begin parallel negotiations on a separate CBM agreement, pointing out that we had already rejected Soviet CBM proposals last summer. They also argued that CBMs should be integrated into, and not concluded separately from or earlier than, a START agreement. The Soviet tactic clearly was to deprive us of any basis for telling the public that productive negotiations are underway. Indeed, the Soviets bluntly stated that they think our main objective on CBMs is to appease public opinion and divert attention from the "stalemated" START negotiations.

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-- The Soviets continued to withhold information we need to evaluate their proposal (e.g., nuclear weapons aggregate and MIRVed systems sublimits).

-- The Soviets continued to turn aside our proposals to establish working groups.

(S) While rejecting the entire U.S. proposal in its present formulation as a basis for agreement, the Soviets particularly attacked our approach as requiring an expensive, massive and unwarranted restructuring of their strategic forces, especially their ICBM force. They repeatedly argued that the U.S. proposal, if adopted, would "emasculate" Soviet strategic forces. We demonstrated that these arguments were exaggerated and that the Soviets could maintain a highly capable strategic force within the proposed U.S. limits through their current modernization programs, with much less effort than they expended during the 1970s. But the Soviets essentially ignored our arguments, making clear that they have no intention of adopting a particular force structure merely because the United States so demands. The Soviets strongly insist upon the considerable "freedom to mix" permitted by a SALT framework.

(S) The Soviets also tabled a draft treaty during this round. With the exception of an unspecified nuclear weapons aggregate, it was essentially SALT II warmed over. In substance, it contained little that we did not already know about the Soviet position. The following were among the few significant new elements:

-- The SALT II ban on new fixed ICBM launchers would be preserved but expanded to include a ban on new "silos" for the "emplacement" of ICBMs; thus, deployment of M-X in closely spaced basing would be precluded.

-- Only one "new type" of ICBM would be permitted, but the absence of an effective date leaves unclear whether the RS-22 would be a new or existing type.

-- Conversion of existing ICBM types into mobile ICBMs would not constitute deployment of the one "new type" of ICBM allowed by the Soviet treaty.

(S) Why are the Soviets stonewalling? There are undoubtedly numerous reasons which may include the following:

-- The Soviets probably prefer to postpone any fundamental movement in START until the INF situation becomes clearer.

-- They may be waiting to assess the impact of political and other developments in the United States, such as the freeze movement, the Scowcroft recommendations, the defense budget debate and early developments in the 1984 election campaign.

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-- The Soviets may calculate that they have the negotiating high ground, and that the United States is under greater domestic and international pressure to demonstrate progress than is the Soviet Union.

-- The Andropov regime may not have consolidated its power sufficiently to take significant steps in START.

(S) The Soviets clearly wish us to conclude that our present START proposal is unsound and unacceptable. Soviet arguments reflect an assessment that our proposal is designed not to promote stability and equality, but to obtain strategic advantages for the United States. To the extent that this assessment may in fact be dominant within the Soviet government, the Soviets can be expected to continue dismissing our proposal in its present form and attempting to draw us into a negotiation within their framework, that is, a renegotiation of SALT II.

#### Preparation for Round Four

(S) In light of the factors discussed above, I think it unlikely that any but the most radical changes in the current U.S. position would draw the Soviets into productive negotiations at the present time. Nor would radical changes be justified in any event. Our fundamental objectives of substantial reductions, stability, equality and effective verification are fundamentally sound and should not be compromised.

(S) Nevertheless, it would be tactically advantageous for us to modify our position in ways that would preserve our basic objectives, remove some unnecessary obstacles, and perhaps make our approach a bit more palatable to the Soviets. Such modifications should not be expected to unlock the door to rapid progress in Round Four. But they could eventually make the Soviets more willing to work within our negotiating framework (rather than rejecting it out of hand in favor of SALT II), thus perhaps setting the stage for constructive discussions in the months ahead. Such moves should include:

-- Elimination of "Phasing." Our current "two-phased" approach to START is ill-conceived and unclear (to us and the Soviets). It hampers our ability to effect the President's public assurances that "everything is on the table." It generates unnecessary Soviet suspicion without serving any discernible U.S. interest. Elimination of "phases" (but without altering our current "second-phase" objective of an equal limit on throw-weight below the current U.S. level) would give our proposal more presentational appeal and make us less vulnerable to public criticisms by the Soviets.

-- Elimination or Relaxation of Indirect Constraints on Throw-weight. Our indirect and direct methods of removing the asymmetry in ballistic missile throw-weight are needlessly redundant. Our indirect constraints (210 heavy and medium missiles/110 mediums/

850 ballistic missiles) have produced a strong negative Soviet reaction on the ground that they would impose unnecessary inflexibility on the Soviet force structure. Our insistence on a specific method of reducing throw-weight is an unfortunate feature of our position that may already have damaged our ability to achieve our objective of equal limits on throw-weight below the current U.S. level. Our principal concern should be to achieve that goal; how it is achieved should be of lesser concern. The direct approach would accomplish U.S. objectives while giving the Soviets considerably more flexibility in structuring their forces. Thus, we should make clear to the Soviets that our throw-weight objective is firm but that we are open-minded on the manner in which it is to be achieved. The indirect approach should not be a sine qua non, and the U.S. delegation should be authorized so to inform the Soviets.

(S) In addition, it is important from a tactical viewpoint that the United States be prepared to table a draft START treaty by the beginning of Round Four. The Soviets will certainly push us to establish a treaty text working group. If we do not have our own treaty to table, we will face the awkward dilemma of working only from the Soviet text or refusing to work on a treaty text at all. The latter course would be hard to square with our frequent criticism of the Soviets for refusing to join us in the working groups we wish to establish (e.g., on CBMs and data exchange) and would reflect poorly on the United States if the Soviets went public. If the preparation of a U.S. draft treaty poses interagency issues which cannot readily be resolved, then we should put those issues aside and table a draft which reflects as much of a consensus as the interagency group can achieve. The document which we initially table need not be complete in every respect.

(S) Finally, it would be helpful to have a U.S. position on SLCMs during Round Four. Such a position, like our ALCM position, should protect U.S. programs. But with ALCMs now on the table, we can expect the Soviets to concentrate more attention on SLCMs in order to seize tactical momentum at the negotiating table as well as a propaganda advantage in the public forum by claiming that the United States seeks to exclude SLCMs from the talks. We should deprive the Soviets of this opportunity.

*Michael H. Mobbs*  
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Representative of the  
Secretary of Defense to the  
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