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THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



18 AUG 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: INF Strategy for 1983 ~~(S)~~

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Authority: EO 13526
Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHS
Date:

APR 02 2018

~~(S)~~ The issue before you on INF is whether the US should take new negotiating initiatives this fall. I believe US interests and those of our Allies will be best served if we do not introduce changes in our position, unless the Soviets move from the unacceptable approach they have maintained.

~~(S)~~ The following considerations lead me to this conclusion:

- The principal argument for new US initiatives is that they would show our seriousness or "sincerity" in the negotiations and thereby preserve political support for deployments. However, none of our Allies has requested formally that we depart materially from the position we have on the table. Moreover, the battle for public opinion in Europe will be waged far removed from the subtleties and nuances of the negotiating record. This battle will be won by bold public relations initiatives, and effective use of the facts (which are on our side).
- The Soviets will remain bent on political and propaganda efforts to block deployments. They will not be prepared to negotiate seriously this fall. Therefore, new initiatives by us would not be likely to produce substantive Soviet concessions now.
- Any real changes in the American position -- with or without shrewdly-timed, countervailing Soviet offers -- are certain to produce insistent demands for a moratorium on deployment, "to provide time for negotiating the new proposals." These demands would come not only from the Soviets, but from their sympathizers in other countries. Finally, the Soviets will continue their desperate efforts to maintain their present monopoly in INF forces, and to block the Pershing at all costs. Most so-called "new US positions" involve agreeing one way or the other with these two Soviet positions. While there is no way completely to avoid this danger, sticking with our present, uncomplicated interim proposal (in the absence of substantive moves by the Soviets) reduces our exposure to this pressure.

NATO 471.61

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- As we approach the critical period ahead, we are not limited to initiatives within the negotiations. Indeed there are other initiatives we could propose or support that could result in greater political benefits. For example, skillful use of the emerging NATO position on reduction of the European deployment of older tactical nuclear weapons could give you an initiative that the general public would readily understand. (NATO coordination on changes in the deployment of older, tactical weapons will be completed in October.)



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