



INTERNATIONAL  
SECURITY POLICY

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ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

#30

9 September 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: NSC Meeting on START, Saturday, 10 September at 11:00 a.m.

(S) This meeting has been called to develop an Administration position on the Build-Down concept and to discuss whether to make changes in our current START position. The pacing factor is Admiral Howe's appearance before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on 14 September, at which he will be expected to present the promised Administration Build-down proposal. Secretary Shultz may use the occasion to argue for modification to our START proposal, both to secure Congressional support for MX and to facilitate future progress in START.

(S) However, we believe that there are compelling reasons for not moving now:

- we have a strong negotiating position, which we can publicly defend as fair (it is based on equality), comprehensive (ALCMs and bombers are fully included) and flexible (e.g. the deployed ballistic missile level and method of reducing the disparity in ballistic missile throw-weight.)
- the Soviets have yet to move in response to the moves we made at the beginning of the last round (June.)
- additional moves now would appear as U.S. indecisiveness and would constitute a reward for Soviet intransigence
- current international situation (Korean airliner incident) makes this a particularly inappropriate time for concessions

(S) Thus, we recommend that no changes be made now to our START proposal. Possible changes that may be described as "minor" (e.g., dropping the 2500 sublimit on ICBM warheads) are in fact important and have not been well thought-out.

(S) We believe that the Administration should signal its willingness to accept a "basic" Build-down package (which appears as the consensus option in the START Discussion Paper at Tab A, pp. 3-4) which fits easily within the current START proposal:

- Integral part of a START agreement
- Ballistic missile warheads only (to a "floor" of 5000)
- Requires reductions at a fixed "annual percentage rate," not tied to modernization

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(S) Finally, the Administration should recognize, internally, that quiet negotiations with key Congressional figures and Scowcroft Commission members will be necessary, and may well eventuate in some further changes to our position in several weeks time.

(S) The rationale, which should probably not be surfaced at the NSC meeting, for the above recommended course of action is as follows:

- We should be working quietly with the Scowcroft Commission now.
- Ultimately, we must be willing to make a deal with the Commission members and key responsible Congressional figures.
- To preserve their credibility, these negotiations must be seen as tough, and the Administration must be seen as agreeing reluctantly.
- Therefore, it is important that at this point we not acquiesce easily to fairly inchoate pressures for changes in our START position.

  
for RICHARD PERLE

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Talking Points  
for NSC Meeting on START  
September 10, 1983

START Discussion Paper

BACKGROUND

- In late August the NSC directed a discussion paper on how to incorporate build-down into the US START position.
- The paper was worked extensively by the Senior Arms Control Policy Group (chaired by Judge Clark).
- The discussion paper will be used at the 10 September NSC meeting for the President to decide the Administration's position on build-down.
- Admiral Howe (State), chairman of the START IG, is scheduled to brief this position to the SFRC on 14 September, prior to the committee's mark-up of a build-down resolution on 20 September.
- There is interagency consensus on the basic build-down position, that build-down should not be tied to modernization and that now is not the time to make fundamental changes in our START position.

POINTS TO BE MADE

- The START Discussion Paper (Tab A) represents an excellent effort to frame the build-down issue for the President's decision.
- It places the technical assessment of the build-down concept (Tab B) forwarded to the NSC in July 1983 in the proper political context.
- Recommend that you:
  - Support the basic build-down position and resist any attempts to link build-down to modernization.
  - The basic position is a guaranteed, mutual build-down of ballistic missile warheads in the context of START as a means of achieving reductions to the proposed level of 5000.
  - The US could accept an annual reduction of approximately 3%, or about 440 warheads per year, which is more or less equivalent to the schedule of warhead reductions already proposed to the Soviets in Geneva.

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- By breaking the tie between modernization and the obligation to reduce numbers of ballistic missile warheads, we avoid the discrepancies that could result if the Soviets decide to defer modernization while we, with our older systems, are forced to continue.
- Heavy bombers could be included in build-down if on the basis of platforms (including retired B-52's) rather than bomber weapons.
- However, including bombers in build-down might require a resolution of the Backfire issue.
- Support the strategy for pursuing the basic build-down position.
- A clear exposition of how our START position, modernization program and build-down fit into a comprehensive approach to a more secure strategic environment.
- Do not support any attempts to augment the basic build-down position with adjustments to the current US START position.
- All of the adjustments need additional analysis.
- For example, the option to ban new types of ICBMs may not preclude MIRVed mobile ICBMs in the future if the Soviets deployed the SS-X-24 as a rail mobile. (The option would have to be changed to avoid this problem.)
- There is consensus that some modifications to our basic position might be considered if absolutely necessary, but should be avoided if possible.

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START Discussion Paper

I. Introduction

There has been interest in the Congress in seeing modifications to our START position -- combined with a build-down proposal -- as evidence of the Administration's seriousness on arms control and as the quid pro quo for support of the President's strategic modernization program. The signals from the Hill, however, are mixed and in many ways contradictory. Moreover, the current US negotiating position is fundamentally sound and the Soviets have given us little ground for believing that additional modifications at this time will result in progress.

On balance, we see no need at this time to adopt fundamental changes to our current START position. However, our current understanding of the situation on the Hill is that some form of a build-down proposal must be forthcoming from the Administration to assure support for defense programs in the upcoming appropriations cycle.

It is apparent, moreover, that there is not a good understanding of our current negotiating proposal -- on the Hill or with the public -- or of the magnitude and significance of the changes made in the last round to bring the US position into line with the recommendations of the President's Commission on Strategic Forces. Therefore, we should undertake a major educational effort on the Hill, stressing that in fact our current START position is commensurate with and responsive to the recommendations of the Commission and that it offers a solid chance for making progress toward reaching agreement with the Soviets -- provided they are interested in reaching agreement.

The issue for decision is what form of build-down we should propose, and how, if at all, it should be augmented by changes in our START position. This decision must be based on an assessment of our national security requirements and of the actual political situation on the Hill -- a situation which is fluid and subject to change over the next two weeks. This paper presents a basic build-down proposal within the START

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negotiations as well as elements that are more extensive with respect to build-down and some possible adjustments to our current START position.

## II. Basic Position

### A. Current US START Position

Prior to Round IV President Reagan announced a number of fundamental changes to the US START position. These changes reflect the recommendations of the President's Commission on Strategic Forces and respond to concerns the Soviets had expressed during the first three rounds of the negotiations. During Round IV the US tabled a draft treaty which embodies this new, more flexible approach while, at the same time, preserving the central element of the US START approach -- mutual reductions to 5,000 ballistic missile warheads.

Following are the major changes to the US position introduced in Round IV:

- We relaxed the limit of 850 deployed ballistic missiles in order to allow the deployment of additional single-EV ICBMs, as recommended by the President's Commission on Strategic Forces.
- We proposed a single-phase agreement, in place of our previous two-phase approach, to make it clear that all systems, including ALCMs, would be limited from the outset of an agreement.
- We proposed limits on heavy bombers (400) and on ALCMs (a maximum of 20 per heavy bomber) which are well below SALT II levels.
- On throw-weight, we offered to withdraw the collateral constraints (the 2500/210/110 subceilings) in favor of a direct limit on aggregate missile throw-weight, if the Soviets prefer. We told the Soviets that we are not insisting on reductions to US levels, but made clear that the level would be a matter of negotiation. We also discussed a variety of other possible approaches to resolving the throw-weight issue and said we would be receptive to any serious Soviet proposals.

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-- We made it clear to the Soviets that the substantial reductions we seek in the strategic forces of both nations would be implemented over time. We stressed -- in accordance with the recommendation of the President's Commission on Strategic Forces -- that our objective is to channel the modernization of both sides in a direction which will enhance stability and reduce the first strike threat.

-- One of the ways we seek to do this is by reductions in the weight -- and hence the destructive power -- of warheads on new ballistic missile systems. We have proposed separate weight ceilings for RVs on MIRV and single-RV systems. We left the specific ceilings blank in our draft treaty in order to demonstrate our desire to take into account Soviet views on what the levels should be.

During the last round, the Soviets also modified some of their previous proposals which were so obviously one-sided that it was clear that they had been made primarily for negotiating purposes: the Soviets expressed a willingness to drop their proposed ban on all ALCMs while maintaining a ban on "long-range" GLCMs and SLCMs, and to modify provisions whose effect would have been to stop deployment of Trident submarines and the D-5 missile. We welcomed these Soviet moves.

However, the Soviets did not respond to our flexibility with any equivalent willingness to modify the central elements of their position. Moreover, they tabled subceilings for MIRV missiles under their 1,800 SNDV aggregate which would, if fully implemented, allow them to deploy over 11,000 ballistic missile warheads and 6,800 warheads on MIRV ICBMs; substantial increases over the already high Soviet levels.

#### B. Basic Build-Down Position

Within the context of START, the US could seek a guaranteed mutual build-down of ballistic missile warheads (to a floor of 5,000) as a means of achieving reductions. The US could accept ballistic missile warhead reductions of approximately 5% per year (based on entry-in-force warhead levels) which equates to a certain, constant number of warheads guaranteed to be retired each year during the treaty's period of reduction. The US would propose to count warheads according to SALT counting and type rules. This would mean that the starting level for US and Soviet forces would be approximately equal.

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From equal accountable entry in force levels, both sides could reduce to a 5,000 floor in slightly over eight years, a guaranteed annual build-down of approximately 440 accountable warheads.

There is an apparent contradiction between the actual deployed warhead figures [redacted] and 7,900 for the Soviets) and the accountable warheads on which the build-down would be based (8,800 on both sides). This could cause the credibility of this approach to be questioned; i.e., the charge could be leveled that we were proposing to build-down [redacted]

[redacted] The contradiction would be explained as follows:

- For existing types of missiles the maximum number of warheads tested must be used to enable verification, and to deny the Soviets any possibility of actually increasing their current advantage over the number of US deployed warheads during the reduction period.
- This counting method would be consistent with figures and counting concepts used in the past with the Soviets and should be relatively easy to negotiate.
- Our START position has as its focus achieving a reduced number of actual deployed warheads. This is constant with the build-down formula. The issue is not how we get to 5,000, but actually achieving the goal of 5,000 deployed RVs.
- Finally, using the [redacted] 7,900 figures would expose us to charges that the Soviets were obliged unfairly to build-down at a faster rate than the US, or that the Soviets were permitted a longer period to reach the floor level.

#### C. Strategy for Pursuing Basic Build-Down Position

Packaging the incorporation of build-down in our START position will be key to its acceptability by the Congress. This will involve a clear exposition of how our START position, modernization program and build-down fit into a comprehensive approach to a more secure strategic environment. We would make clear that our approach to build-down represented a seriously considered, firm Administration position.

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o The US strategic modernization program and the US arms control position as modified during the last round of negotiations to fully incorporate the recommendations of the President's Commission on Strategic Forces are designed to complement each other in an overall framework designed to promote long-term strategic stability.

o Our modernization program includes modernizing our aging bomber forces and ALCMs, the B-1 bomber and the Stealth bomber, to achieve greater survivability and penetration of Soviet air defenses. Modernization of the SLBM force with Trident II will permit greater use of wide-ocean areas so as to reduce the effectiveness of Soviet ASW against the SSBN fleet and, thus, ensure its long-term survivability. All of these changes are designed to promote long-term stability of our strategic forces.

o Our modernization program also includes a limited number of MX missiles designed to counterbalance Soviet hard-target kill capability and, thereby, to increase near-term stability. It also serves to encourage, in combination with the D-5 SLBM, Soviet movement from large silo-based ICBMs toward smaller mobile ICBMs while we, ourselves, pursue, on an urgent basis, development of a small single-warhead ICBM adaptable to a number of more survivable basing modes, to replace Minuteman. Again, the goal is maintaining and enhancing the contribution of the ICBM force to deterrence and long-term stability.

o Complementary to this program, our START position focuses on deep reductions in the destructive capability and potential of the strategic forces of the US and Soviet Union and to channel residual deterrent capability into more survivable and, thus, more stable systems, that is, toward greater dependence on small single-RV ICBMs, on SLBMs and on second-strike bomber forces.

o This position has as its central element reduction by roughly one-third in the numbers of deployed ballistic missile warheads of both sides, a key measure of destructive capability.

o It also calls for significant reductions in the throw-weight of Soviet missiles. Throw-weight is an important measure of destructive capability and potential because in an agreement limiting both sides to equal numbers of warheads, the side with the greater throw-weight can deploy larger warheads or in a breakout deploy more warheads.

o We have also indicated wide flexibility on the ceiling for deployed ballistic missiles, which, in combination with our proposed missile RV and throw-weight reductions, should further encourage Soviet movement toward more survivable and, thus, more stabilizing single-RV missiles.

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o To this position we now intend to add a new major element suggested by the US Congress -- a mutual, verifiable, guaranteed build-down of ballistic missile warheads.

o We have studied the concept intensively over the past months to see how it could be integrated in and complementary to our START position and the US objectives in START. These objectives include significant reductions leading to increased stability, equality in key measures of destructive capability and potential, and verifiability. A number of alternatives were examined and discarded because they failed in one way or another to meet these essential objectives.

o The build-down we will propose will be an integral part of our START proposal, taken in concert with reductions in all other elements of our proposal.

o Specifically, it will call for both sides to reduce from their approximately equal current levels by about 50 per year (about 440 warheads) over an eight-year period to a level of 5,000 ballistic missile warheads.

o We have chosen percentage reductions in ballistic missile warheads to an agreed floor rather than tying it to modernization because of the obvious and serious verification and compliance problems we have with regard to differentiating Soviet modernization of existing systems from new systems, a key element in any build-down tied to modernization.

The percentage reduction formula has the same effect on ballistic missile warheads as a two-for-one build-down but would ensure a guaranteed Soviet build-down.

o We believe that this significant addition to our current highly-flexible START position involving deep reductions in strategic destructive capability and potential provides a sound and fair basis for an arms control agreement with the Soviet Union, one that promotes long-term stability while allowing each side great latitude to configure its forces to meet its strategic needs.

o This modified position, in combination with our planned strategic modernization program, forms the two key building blocks upon which, with the cooperation of the Soviet Union, we can build a more secure and stable strategic environment, one that reduces the risk of war.

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o Given this overall framework and a consensus of the Congress and the US public behind this coordinated and comprehensive approach to arms control and national security, we provide the clearest mandate to the US negotiating team to seek an equitable and verifiable arms control agreement at lower, more stable levels. We can only hope that the Soviet Union can exhibit equal flexibility and desire to achieve such an agreement.

#### D. Soviet Reaction to Basic Build-Down Position

##### 1. Initial reactions

The initial Soviet reaction to the build-down is likely to be negative mainly on the ground that it does not address bomber weapons in aggregation with ballistic missile warheads. A second objection to the proposal, possibly not voiced, is that the Soviets have indicated that they desire to retain significantly more than 5,000 warheads in their ballistic missile inventory.

However, it is unlikely that they will either accept or reject the proposal outright. They have been following closely the internal US debate on arms control policy and could possibly see advantage in encouraging Congressional advocates of the proposal by evidencing some interest in it.

The initial Soviet reaction will also be influenced by the current state of US-USSR relations, especially the public flavor, which does not appear to provide a climate for, much less allow, the Soviets to compromise on central issues. Moreover, we know of no apparent internal pressures on the Soviet leadership to negotiate seriously.

##### 2. Possible Soviet Actions--After Round V

In the absence of an outright rejection, the Soviets at least may attempt to modify a build-down proposal to minimize its effect on their force modernization programs. Some actions the Soviets could take to protect their forces while appearing to accept the basic build-down concept include (in each case the Soviet proposal would include all strategic offensive systems):

--proposing an agreement where modernization triggers build-down; this would enable them to defer modernization for a number of years since their strategic forces are generally more modern than ours;

--proposing an agreement in which modernization of existing deployed systems was exempted; this would allow them to deploy follow-on systems without triggering build-down;

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- proposing an agreement where modernization restrictions apply only to those systems first flight-tested after the agreement goes into effect; this would protect weapons like the SS-X-24, PL-5 and SS-N-18 follow-on, which are in a late stage of development.

The Soviets may choose to make a direct counter build-down proposal rather than negotiate a US proposal. Some key elements of proposals they could make to promote their START position while undermining ours include:

- aggregating bomber weapons and cruise missiles with ballistic missile RVs;
- proposing a build-down ratio higher than the US would accept;
- proposing different rules for a build-down that impact more heavily on the US.

It is possible that after a lengthy negotiating process, and then only in return for appropriate US concessions, the Soviets would agree to some type of build-down as a mechanism for the reductions required in a negotiated START agreement.

### III. Modifications to the Basic Build-Down Position

If it is decided that we must augment the basic build-down position, the following elements could be considered. Adoption of these elements should be avoided if possible.

#### A. Percent Reductions "Build-down" Tied to Modernization

This variant would add the link between modernization and force reductions to the percentage annual build-down in START. Under this concept, there would be two mechanisms for reductions. First, a percent annual reduction would be in effect. Second, for every new, modern warhead deployed, a certain number would have to be withdrawn. The preferred formulation would require 1.5 older warheads to be withdrawn for each new warhead deployed. This would represent a 3:2 across-the-board build-down for ballistic missile warheads. An alternative of 2:1 build-down for ICBM warheads and 3:2 build-down for SLBM warheads could also be considered, if necessary. In any event, the actual reductions would be the greater required by either the modernization schedule or the specified percent annual reductions.

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The central problem with linking the build-down to modernization is the difficulty in defining, negotiating and effectively verifying "modernization". A build-down with modernization would also be particularly sensitive to the definition of new warheads. The ambiguities inherent in this approach would prolong negotiations and bedevil an actual build-down.

#### B. Inclusion of Heavy Bombers in Build-Down

This variant would build-down heavy bombers in addition to ballistic missile ICBMs by reducing heavy bombers in the force on the basis of a negotiated schedule. As long as retired B-52s (in storage) are counted as well as operational bombers and a floor consistent with our current position in START (400/350) is used, a variety of build-down ratios for bombers would not adversely affect our force plans. A reduction schedule that is similar to that proposed for missile warheads would be easiest to negotiate and explain publicly. A build-down of bomber weapons would not be acceptable to the US.

#### IV. Adjustments to the START Position

Some believe that pressures on the Hill to adopt build-down and to change our START position are deeply held and transcend the current international political circumstances. This is clearly not the time for fundamental changes or major initiatives in our START position. Nevertheless, pressures may be such that we will need now to take the steps which could propitiate the condition for achieving progress in START in the coming months.

On the other hand, it is a widespread interagency view that since our position is fundamentally sound and that recent significant changes have not been adequately responded to by the Soviets, changes to our START position are now unnecessary and would be perceived by the Soviets as a lack of resolve. Moreover, the Soviets are unlikely to make major moves in START until the situation in INF becomes more clear.

The following adjustments to the current US position could be added to the basic build-down proposal to demonstrate additional flexibility in our negotiating stance. Additional analysis on each of these changes would be needed before a decision is made to adopt any of them.

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1. Unconditionally Drop 2,500 Sub-Limit on ICBM Warheads. This could be seen by some critics of the current START position as a major move in our START position. Under the current 5,000 ballistic missile warhead limit, the Soviets probably would not deploy more than about 3,400 ICBM warheads in any event.

2. Adopt 2,500 MIRV ICBM Sub-Limit. This change could be portrayed as an additional step toward consistency with the recommendations of the President's Commission on Strategic Forces. It would represent an intermediate step between our current position and unconditionally dropping the 2,500 sub-limit as discussed above.

3. ALCM Limits Close to Our Requirements. The current US position would theoretically permit 8,000 ALCM warheads, [REDACTED] We have not proposed sub-limits on ALCM-carrying heavy bombers. We could propose a direct limit on ALCMs of 3,000-4,000, [REDACTED] This could be implemented by offering a sub-ceiling of 200 on ALCM carriers. Proposing either of these limits would undercut critics' charges that the US is not willing to discuss reasonable limits on its bomber forces.

4. Ban New Types of MIRVed ICBMs. A ban on new types of MIRVed ICBMs would be consistent with the recommendations of the President's Commission on Strategic Forces that encourage greater reliance on single-RV missiles. It would also insure that future types of mobile ICBMs are single-RV missiles. Presumably, this ban would allow no new MIRV ICBMs beyond the MX and the SS-X-24. The US would need to decide first whether it needs to protect the option of a new type of MIRV ICBM after the MX. This type of ban would also raise the difficult problem of rules concerning modernization of existing types.

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# **BUILD-DOWN OPTIONS**

OPTION	ICBM WARHEADS	SLBM WARHEADS	BOMBERS	FLOOR	PRECURSOR AGREEMENT OR PART OF START?
1	↔ 2 FOR 1 ↔		2 FOR 1 ON WEAPONS BASIS	8000 WEAPONS	PRECURSOR: AS PART OF START WOULD REQUIRE MAJOR START CHANGES
2	↔ 2 FOR 1 ↔		PLATFORMS ONLY	5000 RVs 400 BOMBERS	BOTH
3	2 FOR 1	3 FOR 2	PLATFORMS ONLY	5000 RVs 400 BOMBERS	BOTH
4	↔ 3 FOR 2 ↔		PLATFORMS ONLY	5000 RVs 400 BOMBERS	BOTH
5	↔ 1 FOR 1 ↔		PLATFORMS ONLY	CURRENT LEVELS	PRECURSOR ONLY
6	PERCENTAGE ANNUAL BUILD-DOWN (7%)		PLATFORMS ONLY	5000 RVs 400 BOMBERS	BOTH

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## SUMMARY OPTION ASSESSMENT

OPTION	CONSISTENCY WITH START	FLEXIBILITY	CONSISTENCY WITH MODERNIZATION PROGRAM	REDUCTIONS	COMMENTS
1	NO	POOR	ONLY WITH HIGH FLOOR	YES	UNDERMINES OUR START POSITION
2	YES	POOR	YES	YES	ALLOWS INSUFFICIENT NEGOTIATING FLEXIBILITY
3	YES	GOOD	YES	YES	ENCOURAGES MORE SURVIVABLE SYSTEMS
4	YES	VERY GOOD	YES	YES	
5	YES	GOOD	YES	NO (CAP)	ONLY FEASIBLE AS PRECURSOR
6	YES	VERY GOOD	YES	YES	NO LINK TO MODERNIZATION MOST SIMILAR TO START REDUCTIONS SCHED.

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