

330-88-0059

BOX 44

U57K

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Jan-Apr 1986

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18 MARCH 1986

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#9

7M 18755(L)

TO: SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
FROM: DR. FRED C. IKLE, USDP
INFO: RICHARD PERLE, ASD/ISP (WITH SECDEF'S PARTY)
SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO SOVIET VIOLATIONS

1. ~~(S)~~ AS YOU KNOW, WE HAD A SENIOR ARMS CONTROL GROUP MEETING LAST FRIDAY TO DISCUSS THE OPTIONS FOR RESPONSES TO SOVIET VIOLATIONS. THE GENERAL SENSE AROUND THE TABLE SEEMED TO BE THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD TO DO SOMETHING. KEN ADELMAN'S SUGGESTION, WHICH YOU SAW, FOR ENDING OUR COMMITMENT NOT TO UNDERCUT SALT II, FOUND SOME FAVOR; THOUGH PAUL NITZE WANTED TO KEEP THE QUANTITATIVE LIMITS OF SALT I AND II. SEVERAL OF US ARGUED THE DECISION SHOULD BE CUT IN BROAD POLICY TERMS, NOT IN TERMS OF SPECIFIC DOD PROGRAMS. ONCE WE ABANDON THE NO UNDERCUT POLICY, OUR DECISIONS ON ENCRYPTION, PEN-AIDS, MINUTEMAN III SUBSTITUTION FOR MMII, ETC., CAN ALL BE TAKEN LIKE OTHER PROGRAMMATIC DOD DECISIONS. I BELIEVE IT'S PREFERABLE FOR DOD NOT TO HAVE TO SORT OUT THESE DEFENSE PROGRAM ADJUSTMENTS IN THE INTER-AGENCY ARENA.

2. ~~(S)~~ I FEAR, HOWEVER, THE TENTATIVE CONSENSUS THAT THE PRESIDENT SHOULD DO "SOMETHING" MIGHT BE MELTED DOWN TO AN INSIGNIFICANT COMPROMISE, IN PART BECAUSE NITZE AND OTHERS WISH TO PRESERVE SOME SALT LIMITS FOR POLITICAL REASONS, IN PART

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
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BECAUSE GRAMM-RUDMAN HAS TAKEN THE STEAM OUT OF OUR IDEA FOR AN "ARMS CONTROL SUPPLEMENTAL." WITH THE BUDGET UNCERTAINTIES AHEAD OF US, MANY OF THE IDENTIFIED PROGRAMMATIC RESPONSES DO NOT LOOK PARTICULARLY COST-EFFECTIVE.

3. ~~4.3~~ IN MY VIEW, THE TIME HAS COME THEREFORE TO COMBINE THE RSVP DECISION WITH THE DECISION ON FOLLOWING THE LEGALLY CORRECT INTERPRETATION OF THE ABM TREATY. FREEING SDI OF THE RESTRICTIVE INTERPRETATION WOULD BE FAR MORE COST-EFFECTIVE THAN ANY OF OUR PROGRAMMATIC RSVP RESPONSES. MOREOVER, IT WILL SOON BE ESSENTIAL, AS YOU KNOW, TO AVOID ALLEGATIONS THAT SDI PROJECTS ARE IN CONFLICT WITH THE (NARROWLY INTERPRETED) TREATY AND TO AVOID ATROPHY OF THE WHOLE PROGRAM WITHIN A FEW YEARS.

4. ~~4.3~~ PARADOXICALLY, OBJECTIONS TO MERGING THE DECISION ON THE TREATY INTERPRETATION WITH THE DECISION ON RESPONSES TO VIOLATIONS COME FROM TWO OPPOSITE DIRECTIONS. ON THE ONE HAND, SOME OF US FEEL THAT FOLLOWING THE LEGALLY CORRECT INTERPRETATION OF A TREATY THAT THE SOVIETS ARE CLEARLY VIOLATING IS EITHER A WEAK, INAPPROPRIATE RESPONSE TO VIOLATIONS, OR COULD MAKE LOOK LIKE A COUNTER-VIOLATION WHAT WAS LEGALLY PERMISSIBLE TO BEGIN WITH. ON THE OTHER HAND, PEOPLE IN OTHER AGENCIES ARE AFRAID EVEN TO COME NEAR THE LESS RESTRICTIVE INTERPRETATION OF THE ABM TREATY FOR FEAR WE WOULD BE ACCUSED OF BEING AGAINST THE TREATY OR DISMANTLING THE FOUNDATION OF ALL ARMS CONTROL.

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5. ~~(S)~~ I CALLED JOHN POINDEXTER THAT HE SHOULD HEAR THE BRIEFING THAT WAS GIVEN TO YOU, ON THE IMPLICATIONS OF FOLLOWING THE OLD VS. THE NEW TREATY INTERPRETATION. WE ARE NOW GETTING THE BRIEFING TO HIM. JOHN POINDEXTER, HOWEVER, EXPRESSED GREAT UNEASINESS ABOUT TOUCHING THIS ISSUE. NOW IS NOT THE RIGHT TIME, HE SEEMED TO FEEL, SINCE WE ARE STILL TESTING GORBACHEV'S POSITION ON ARMS CONTROL. IT'S ALL RIGHT TO CONSIDER SCUTTling SALT, HE SEEMED TO SAY, BUT DON'T GET NEAR MAKING ANY CHANGE IN THE RESTRICTIVE PRACTICES FOR SDI.

6. ~~(S)~~ THIS TROUBLES ME. IF WE CAN'T MAKE USE NOW OF WHAT IS LEGALLY PERMITTED UNDER THE ABM TREATY, HOW WOULD WE EVER FIND A REASON TO USE THE WITHDRAWAL CLAUSE? I ALSO BELIEVE THE ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT THE RELATIVE POLITICAL COSTS ARE MISTAKEN. TO SCUTTLE SALT MAY CAUSE MORE OF A NEGATIVE POLITICAL REACTION AT HOME AND ABROAD THAN TO ALLOW SDIO TO FOLLOW THE TREATY INTERPRETATION WHICH WE HAVE ALREADY DEFENDED BEFORE CONGRESS AS LEGALLY CORRECT.

7. ~~(S)~~ ALSO, ONCE WE HAVE TAKEN THE POLITICAL HEAT ON SCUTTling SALT, THE ARGUMENTS WILL BE ALL THE STRONGER THAT WE MUST NOT COMPOUND THIS DAMAGE BY ALSO CHANGING OUR PRACTICES UNDER THE ABM TREATY. HENCE, YOU SHOULD CONSIDER TAKING ADVANTAGE NOW OF THE INTER-AGENCY VIEW THAT SOMETHING NEEDS TO BE DONE TO RESPOND TO VIOLATIONS AND STEER THIS ENERGY INTO A DIRECTION THAT IS USEFUL, INDEED VITAL FOR THE SURVIVAL OF SDI. IF I WERE FORCED TO CHOOSE, I WOULD RATHER CONTINUE THE

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SALT NO-UNDERCUT POLICY AND FREE SDI FROM THE RESTRICTIVE
INTERPRETATION THAN GET PERMISSION TO MAINTAIN, AT
CONSIDERABLE COST, A FEW OLD POSEIDEON BOATS BUT CONDEMN
SDI TO SLOW STRANGULATION.

8. ~~LET~~ LET ME HAVE YOUR GUIDANCE HOW TO MOVE THIS ISSUE.
WE WILL HAVE ANOTHER SACG ON THE SUBJECT THURSDAY AND THERE
WILL BE AN NSPG UPON YOUR RETURN.

Declassified in Full
Authority: EO 13526
Chief, Records and Declass Div, WHS
Date: 15OCT2024

Office of the Secretary of Defense Chief, RDD, ESD, WHS
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Declassify: X Declassify in Part: Deny in Full:
Reason:
MDR: 22-M-0157

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