

DECLASSIFIED

Authority NND 979574
By SP NARA Date 2/12/10

Letter of Principals

No. 12 of 67 copies
Series A. This document consists of 13 pages

(DMS)

~~SECRET~~

UNITED STATES ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT AGENCY

WASHINGTON

*Copy to G
6/PM
S/P*

August 19, 1965

OFFICE OF
THE DIRECTOR

*EUR
FE
NEA*

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DEPUTIES TO THE COMMITTEE OF PRINCIPALS

SUBJECT: The Impact of a Comprehensive Test Ban on Proliferation (U)

Forwarded for your use in connection with the forthcoming meeting on Monday, August 23, 1965, is the paper prepared in the State Department as a result of the decision made at the last meeting of the Deputies on August 9, 1965.

STATE DEPARTMENT SYSTEMATIC REVIEW
 Retain class'n Change/classify to Confidential
 Declassify with concurrence of _____
EO 12958, 25X (6)
FPC/HDR by FRG Date: 11/6/95

Adrian S. Fisher

Withdrawal No. 68D 452-28

Adrian S. Fisher
Acting Director

Attachment:

Paper, as above

~~SECRET~~

This information contained in this document may not be disseminated outside the receiving department or agency without the consent of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency.

GROUP 3
Downgraded at 12 year intervals; not automatically declassified.

DECLASSIFIED
EO 12958, 25X

WHEN SEPARATED FROM ATTACHMENTS,
HANDLE THIS DOCUMENT AS UNCLASSIFIED.

NND 981444 A
By STP Date 3/14/01

DECLASSIFIED

Authority UND 979574
By SG NARA Date 2/2/10

~~SECRET~~

The Impact of a Comprehensive Test Ban on Proliferation (U)

We believe that there are strong political advantages to be gained from a comprehensive test ban treaty, in particular (a) a major contribution to curbing nuclear proliferation, (b) a salutary effect on Soviet-American and general East-West relations at a time when the momentum of detente of 1963 has greatly attenuated, and (c) a significant exacerbation of Sino-Soviet relations with consequent benefit to the United States. We therefore favor a comprehensive test ban, even at some cost to our own weapons development program, so long as there are no overriding military considerations based either on risks of major Soviet advances through clandestine testing which could upset the strategic balance, or on costs to essential US defense programs.

The present discussion is addressed to the contribution a comprehensive test ban could make to our anti-proliferation objective.

A Complete Test Ban

A ban on all nuclear weapons tests would compel potential nuclear powers to take a stand on nuclear weapons development, even though it would not totally foreclose their options to develop weapons. Moreover, it would do so on an issue on which most of them--especially Japan, India, and Sweden--have previously taken a strong and unqualified positive stand. To reverse this stand now would be politically costly. For

~~SECRET~~

GROUP 3
Downgraded at 12 year
intervals; not auto-
matically declassified.

~~SECRET~~

-2-

the future, too, the most important impact would be psychological and political: adherence to a complete test ban would make very much more difficult and unlikely future political decisions to build nuclear weapons.

A comprehensive test ban would not necessarily prevent a non-nuclear country from later developing nuclear weapons. Such a country could invoke the withdrawal clause, or develop a simple weapon without testing it, or violate the treaty. The last of these is, however, very unlikely--withdrawal would be exercised first. It is not excluded that some country would develop and stockpile weapons without testing, though this is not considered likely, or at most in one or two countries. Even the withdrawal clause would probably only be resorted to in an extreme case.

In short, a complete test ban would not provide iron-clad assurance against proliferation, even among those who adhere. What it would do is to contribute significantly to the inhibitions on proliferation world-wide, and almost certainly resolve some countries, which are not now fully committed, not to develop weapons. This is, perhaps, the most we can say; we believe that it is enough. We would regard that degree of additional curb on proliferation as a major achievement.

The first judgment we must make is, of course, the likelihood of the adherence of key powers to a comprehensive test ban treaty.

A comprehensive test ban treaty, based on no quota of obligatory on-site inspections, but with rejection of a request for on-site inspection of a suspicious event as presumptive evidence of violation and grounds

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

-3-

for withdrawal, would probably be acceptable to the Soviet Union, though not necessarily immediately. It would certainly be much more likely to be negotiable than a proposal involving any number or quota of obligatory on-site inspections. (If the Soviet Union did not accept the proposal, the relative propaganda position of the United States would be greatly enhanced, though this of course would only be a "consolation prize.") The treaty would be accepted by the United Kingdom. We believe that neither France nor Communist China would sign this, or any other, test ban treaty.

The position of the potential nuclear powers has been considered on a case by case basis. We conclude that probably all the five key potential nuclear powers would adhere: India, Israel, Sweden, Japan, and the Federal Republic of Germany. Of the three other countries whose positions seem particularly relevant, we conclude that the UAR and Pakistan would probably adhere, and that Indonesia almost certainly would not. In some of these cases, favorable outcome seems certain; in some others circumstances and conditions could make a difference, but we believe that on balance they would sign.

We have also considered the case of an extension of the present ban to cover larger-yield underground nuclear tests considered detectable with existing or planned national means of detection and identification (i.e., tests yielding more than magnitude 4.5 on the Richter seismic scale).

~~SECRET~~

SECRET

-4-

A Threshold Ban

The "threshold ban" would have considerably less likelihood of acceptance by the USSR, somewhat less likelihood of acceptance by some non-nuclear countries, and in any case less impact on curbing proliferation since smaller-yield underground testing would be sanctioned. (Moreover, a threshold ban would cement us even more solidly into the position of relating a complete ban to complete detection and identification--thus making more, rather than less, difficult any future shift to seeking a complete ban.)

The chief reason that we believe some non-nuclear states would probably oppose or stand aloof from a threshold ban is that it would appear to be (indeed, it would be) discriminatory in favor of the existing nuclear powers with their sophisticated testing experience. This discrimination would provoke objection, and possible non-adherence, both on technical and political grounds.

In net, from the standpoint of impact on the proliferation problem a threshold ban would be very dubious; first, because of probable Soviet rejection; if agreed to by the Soviets, while it would probably be adhered to by most of the potential nuclear states, there would be serious question in some cases; and, finally, it would in any event be much less of a technical inhibition on proliferation than a complete ban.

SECRET

SECRET

-5-

Effects of Chinese and French Testing

Assuming adherence, would India and Japan, in particular, continue to stay in a comprehensive test ban treaty if Communist China continued to test and build a nuclear arsenal? One cannot predict all the relevant developments. It is, however, clear that while accession of India and Japan to a comprehensive test ban would not necessarily bind them forever not to produce and test nuclear weapons, it would at the least defer such action for some time and contribute to at least a temporary halt to proliferation. Sweden, Germany, and the other European states would be likely to remain under the test ban even though France and Communist China continued to test, particularly if satisfactory nuclear arrangements are adopted within NATO. Other signatories, including Israel and the UAR, would not be likely to be influenced by continued French and Chinese testing.

Likelihood of Weapons Development Without Testing

Theoretically, any country capable of constructing nuclear weapons could do so even without testing. In reality, at least some countries would be deterred by uncertainties of success (e.g., probably the UAR), and most others because the decision to sign the test ban would in fact precipitate and involve an internal national decision not to produce nuclear weapons (e.g., Sweden and probably Japan).

More likely would be weapons development up to the test stage as insurance against a possible future need to withdraw from the test ban

SECRET

~~SECRET~~

-6-

treaty. Israel, and possibly later on India and Japan, might conduct weapons development up to the testing stage, but without testing and without building a stockpile of weapons. Israel is the one case where a small stock of conservatively designed untested weapons might be manufactured.

Under a "threshold" ban, it is more likely that Israel and India would in time develop, test underground, and manufacture weapons, and that Japan and Sweden might also do so.

Conclusion

It is, therefore, our conclusion that a comprehensive test ban acceptable to the US and the USSR in the near future would achieve wide adherence among potential nuclear powers, probably including all of the key ones: Israel, India, Sweden, Japan, Germany, the UAR, and Pakistan. France and Communist China (and Indonesia, Albania, North Korea, North Vietnam, Cambodia, and perhaps Cuba) would not sign, but this would not substantially dilute the value of the treaty. Over the long run, India and Japan might withdraw if they came to consider it necessary to meet the growing Chinese threat to their security. Israel's continued adherence would be affected by the whole range of Arab-Israeli relations. Some of these three countries might develop weapons up to the testing stage, and particularly in the case of Israel

~~SECRET~~

DECLASSIFIED

Authority NUD 979574
By S9 NARA Date 2/2/10

~~SECRET~~

-7-

might even stockpile a few untested weapons. But these are the qualifications; the main conclusion is that a comprehensive test ban would have a major positive impact on curbing proliferation.

A threshold ban on larger underground tests would be less likely to be acceptable to the Soviet Union, less likely to gain the accession of all the key potential nuclear states, and less likely to restrain those who did sign from nuclear weapons development. It would probably contribute to non-proliferation, but in weighing pros and cons its contribution to non-proliferation would be significantly less than a comprehensive ban. (It could even have a negative impact by de-fusing the whole test ban issue with a loophole for weapons development which would not cause the governments concerned to face up to the decision on whether to produce nuclear weapons, a decision most would make when they decided on adherence to a comprehensive test ban.)

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

-8-

Annex: Attitudes of Potential Nuclear Powers toward a Test Ban TreatySweden

The Swedish Government has long advocated a complete test ban, and its representatives in the General Disarmament talks are actively doing so now. There are elements opposed to this policy, particularly in the military, but we do not believe that they would prevail if a decision had to be made in the next year or so. It would probably not make any appreciable difference whether the broadened treaty were complete or only covered tests above some detection threshold.

It is considered unlikely that Sweden would develop weapons once a decision had been made to adhere to a comprehensive test ban. It is also unlikely that Sweden would ever be the first country to invoke the escape clause (even though during the domestic debate on approving the test ban, the Government might argue that it had not altogether abandoned the option of future nuclear weapons development, owing to the escape clause).

Germany

The West Germans, despite reluctance in some quarters, would probably adhere to either a complete or threshold test ban. Some elements in the CDU and FDP might urge that as a matter of principle

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

-9-

the FRG should stand aside from any arms control measure desired by the USSR in the absence of some Soviet concession toward German reunification. However, this view would not prevail.

This judgment is based on the assumption that the test ban would stand alone, and not be linked with any European security or other issues. The technical-legal question of avoiding recognition of East Germany would remain, but could no doubt be settled on the basis of extension of the relevant provision of the earlier test ban.

Japan

It would be difficult for the Japanese Government not to sign a comprehensive test ban treaty, and we are confident that they would do so. Even if the Government wished to keep open its options, we can see no politically feasible way in which it could explain a refusal to a public overwhelmingly opposed to nuclear weapons and testing.

Japan would also sign a threshold test ban, except conceivably in the case where several other potential nuclear powers such as India declined to do so.

India

India would have reservations to a broadened test ban, but even if inclined to equivocate would probably find it too difficult to

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

-10-

resist a major ground-swell of international opinion favoring a total test ban. Indian representatives at Geneva are presently urging a comprehensive test ban, and this is of course a long-standing position of the Indian Government. The escape clause would probably be regarded as sufficient insurance in protecting the ultimate option of going for an independent nuclear capability, if India decided at some future time that that course of action was necessary.

While we believe the chances for Indian adherence to a treaty under present conditions are good, these chances have declined somewhat from virtual certainty a few years ago and may well decline further over the next several years. As long as China remains beyond the pale of international disarmament agreements, and India does not have firm guarantees of protection from the major nuclear powers, decisions on disarmament proposals of this kind will be painful for India.

India would prefer a complete test ban to a threshold one, regarding the latter as discriminatory in the favor of the present nuclear powers. On balance, it is likely that India would sign a threshold ban if most other potential nuclear powers did so, particularly if they believed they would be able to test below the threshold.

Pakistan

We believe that Pakistan would adhere to a comprehensive or threshold test ban treaty, unless India refused to sign. It is also possible that

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

-11-

Pakistan might decline as a gesture of solidarity with the Chinese Communists, especially if they saw some special reason for currying favor with Peking at the time; under present circumstances we do not believe this would be their position. (Pakistan is likely, however, to speak out with understanding for a Chinese refusal.)

Israel

Israel would probably adhere to a comprehensive or threshold test ban. The Israelis might hesitate to sign such an agreement until it was apparent that the UAR would also sign, but they would probably not make their acceptance contingent on UAR adherence. (They might regard UAR non-adherence as a standing justification to invoke the escape clause at whatever time they were ready to test a weapon, thus gaining credit for their forthcoming attitude on the test ban, without losing any of their freedom of action.)

The UAR

The UAR would probably adhere to a new broadened test ban agreement, if--and only if--Israel did so. The UAR might still be hesitant if France were not a party to either a complete test ban or some non-proliferation agreement. The UAR has also held that Communist China should be a party to any new agreement for the control of nuclear weapons. Nonetheless,

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

-12-

if India should adhere regardless of Chinese refusal, the UAR probably would not insist on Chinese adherence as a precondition. On balance, we believe that the UAR would probably sign a comprehensive test ban if Israel and India did so.

Indonesia

It is virtually certain that Indonesia would not adhere to any broadened test ban agreement. Regardless of reported intentions to test a Chinese weapon in Indonesia, we believe that simply on political grounds Indonesia would align itself with Communist China and against a US-UK-USSR treaty.

Other Countries

It is likely that North Vietnam, North Korea, Cambodia, and Albania would not sign. It is also likely on balance, but less sure, that Cuba would not sign.

We believe that almost all other countries of the world would adhere to the treaty, and that any possible exceptions (e.g., Congo/Brazzaville) would be insignificant. In particular, we believe that the Republic of South Africa, Brazil, Argentina, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Switzerland, and other long-term potential nuclear powers would adhere to the treaty.

~~SECRET~~