To bring them up to speed. In this highly formative stage, I believe we should take full advantage of this opportunity, with priority attention in the area of arms control and non-proliferation. In order to ease the burden on our hosts and our excellent, but harriedly staff in Kiev, we should stage these visits to avoid overlaps. We should also consider an informal division of labor with our NATO allies, some of whom would probably be interested in doing the same.

6. The only point where I encountered an absolutely firm, unyielding Ukrainian position concerned the future of a center and the role of Gorbachev. Even before the December 8 meeting in Minsk, we found a uniform view that the center no longer existed. Thus, there was no receptivity when I encouraged the Ukrainians to participate in Supreme Soviet sessions to ratify CFE and start. In talks December 9 with Fokin and Zlenko, they stressed the historic character of the Minsk decisions and their irrevocable character. Fokin, who was at Minsk and read to me from the signed copy of the agreement (but declined to show me a copy) put particular stress on the fact that the new "Commonwealth of Independent States" will have no center and no president.

7. Recognition by the United States is clearly at the top of the Ukrainian agenda. However, the Ukrainians believe that they are inevitable and put no pressure on us, nor will they on you. They will remain calm on this point until they see our action going beyond the January 23-30 CSCE Prague ministerial, which I believe they have picked as their debut on the world stage.

8. On the basis of my talks in Kiev, I believe the Ukrainians either have or soon will satisfy your five points, and are prepared to be responsible on nuclear issues. I therefore recommend that we move ahead on recognition, if at all possible in close company with the

9. On arms control issues, I found the Ukrainians ready to work closely with us. They will not participate in any US/Russian superpower meeting on CFE and START, but they are prepared to do whatever our lawyers ask, aside from going to Moscow, to bring the treaties into force, and apply them on Ukrainian territory. We should be able to work this out in a way that satisfies the...
1. From the Nunn-Lugar collection of the National Security Archive

10. On nuclear command and control, the Ukrainians told us that the old central control remained intact, although Zlenko admitted during our final meeting, December 9, that in the maze of the Minsk meeting he could not describe exactly how the central authority and the chain of command would now work in practice to ensure unified command and control. I urged him that he and Kravchuk be able to describe how this system works to you on December 17. Against the likelihood that the existing system will collapse, the Ukrainians have been working with Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan to establish a new collective control that would not give them direct control over the weapons on their territory, but would give them "political" control over their non-use. This should be workable, but it does raise some questions.

11. Defense Minister Morozov told us he had agreed with Union Defense Minister to return all RPI all tactical nuclear systems to Russia for dismantlement. With Ukrainian participation, he hopes to accelerate the removal of the SS-19's from seven to five years and he hopes that some subsequent agreement with the United States will lead to the early removal of the SS-24's. I believe that one reason the Ukrainians are so keen to get rid of all nuclear weapons asap is that doing so would remove yet another reason for "central" involvement in their affairs. They told us that they were ready to begin the process of adherence to the NPT as a non-nuclear weapons state immediately, and were able to answer most of their questions on this point.

12. On human rights, respect for minorities and sanctity of frontiers, we received all the right answers. The Ukrainians are getting their laws and administrative structures right, although this will take some time. However, old habits die hard, and from Kravchuk on down, we are dealing with a group of communist apparatchiks who have changed their coats on the run. We will have to keep the pressure on, including a visit by Dick Schifter (which they said they would welcome) to ensure that this continues in the right direction. I raised Jewish emigration with Zlenko and he cheerfully accepted a list of refugees that I had obtained from the Council on Soviet Jewry.

13. One emotional point, which I feel sure will come up with you, is the Romanian claim to the Bukovina and other parts of the western Ukraine. Zlenko said he had cancelled a visit to Bucharest and refused the Romanian BT.

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For the Secretary from A/S Liles

...Corrected copy (upgrade to exists)
Note to DO/CC: Upgrade to exists per Mr. Perry 5/5/0

E: 13966 - DECLASS
Tags: Prel, Peon, Ur
Subject: My talks in Kiev
Offer of recognition, over this issue. I told him that we insisted on the CSCE principle that frontiers can only be changed by peaceful, consensual means, which seemed to satisfy Zlenko.

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