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To: The Secretary

From: PM - Reginald Bartholomew, Acting

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SCC/NSC Meeting on SALT: March 10, 3:00 P.M.

The purpose of this meeting is to zero in on serious options for consideration by the President. A principal's-only meeting to continue the Thursday discussion is set for Saturday afternoon. After these meetings, there will probably be at least one more meeting of the principals, presumably at an NSC session next week, before the President makes a decision and provides guidance on our SALT position for the Moscow visit.

This SCC meeting is still aimed at developing a range of acceptable "outcomes" for SALT TWO agreements. It is not designed to open a discussion of negotiating strategies, which could involve combining certain proposals into appropriate sequences to maximize our tactical position. Once our substantive approach is approved, you will have to consider the question of negotiating tactics in the context of final preparations for Moscow.

The issue of timing and scope of consultations with our NATO allies still remains to be resolved. At the very least, you are scheduled to brief the NAC on March 26th, on your way to the Soviet Union. We are still exploring the question of whether an advanced briefing team should be sent to Brussels before your briefing. I am working with Art Hartman on this issue.

Your strategy for the Thursday meeting should remain essentially the same as for the last SCC meeting -- to preserve as serious potential outcomes (a) Vladivostok levels and preferential reductions, as well as (b) compromise cruise missile/Backfire solutions of special interest to the Department. If, in addition,

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IS/FPC/CDR FHP Date: 5/29/96

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more extreme and less realistic options can be eliminated at this stage, so much the better.

Background

The last SCC meeting resulted in consensus on the need to retain, as viable approaches, options close to Vladivostok levels on central systems with associated compromise cruise missile and Backfire solutions. The meeting also endorsed as potentially useful the concept of cruise missile solutions involving limits of 300 km on all types of cruise missiles (other than ALCMs on heavy bombers) and called into question the desirability of permitting long-range GLCMs of 2500 km -- although this option still remained in play.

On the question of reductions, the SCC meeting reinforced the importance of examining significant reductions down to aggregate levels of 2000 with preferential reductions of MLBMs. Furthermore, in part due to strong Presidential interest in deep reductions, the option of lowering central systems levels to 1500 was judged to warrant closer examination.

The option to defer cruise missile and Backfire solutions, while not receiving a great deal of attention, was considered to be of sufficient importance to carry forward as a possible approach.

As a consequence of the SCC meeting, the interagency working group was asked to: (1) narrow the range of cruise missile/Backfire options under each basic approach in the context of producing a revised paper on SALT packages; (2) prepare a more careful examination of the deferral option; and (3) conduct a more refined analysis of reductions down to 1500.

In addition, we have prepared a separate paper investigating in some depth the option of banning cruise missiles above 300 km, with the exception of ALCMs on heavy bombers which would be banned above 2500 km and subjected to platform limitations.

The three interagency papers and the paper prepared within the Department are being made available directly to your office for inclusion in your briefing book.

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Discussion

The most relevant question to be addressed at the Thursday SCC meeting is the range of SALT TWO approaches and options that should be considered by the President in his selection of a US position to be surfaced with the Soviets in the context of the Moscow trip. Unfortunately, the interagency group was unable to narrow the range of options, given the strong support for differing options from various agencies. The approaches now judged by the working group to warrant closer scrutiny are summarized in the Tables at Tabs 1 and 2, dealing with Vladivostok levels and significant reductions respectively. A more complete analysis of SALT approaches, including the full range of possible options, is contained in the revised interagency paper on SALT packages.

-- Vladivostok Levels. Central systems under this approach remain in the range of approximately 2300 with MIRVed launchers at 1320. The key issues here center around the US and Soviet interest in maintaining the basic Vladivostok levels, when compared with the desirability and feasibility of significant reductions, and the particular cruise missile/Backfire solution connected to these Vladivostok limits. Five cruise missile/Backfire packages are presented (see Tab 1):

° Deferral. Even after a more careful examination of the deferral option, we continue to question the advisability as well as the negotiability of supporting this approach as a US position. We prefer to think of deferral as possibly serving as a mutually-agreed fallback solution after efforts are made in SALT TWO to reach a compromise settlement; the interagency paper supports this point.

° Settlement 1. This package, proposed by DOD, would permit the US to go forward with an ALCM program for all 270 of our newer B-52s (the Gs and Hs) as well as a 2500 km GLCM and surface ship SLCM program. Limits on the latter systems are connected to Backfire levels in an effort to establish a Euro-strategic balance. Backfire itself is dealt with by collateral constraints plus a separate limit of 300 -- an approach which is intermediate between counting in the aggregate and collateral constraints plus

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a Soviet production statement. We believe this package to be less than satisfactory on arms control grounds and difficult to negotiate. We recognize the need to protect US long-range ALCMs, but we question the validity of long-range GLCMs.

° Settlement 2. This package, suggested by the Department, seeks to construct a true compromise which protects our ALCM program, albeit limiting numbers of platforms through the so-called MIRV counting rule, while permitting 1500 km GLCMs. In addition to protecting the most important US cruise missile program (long-range ALCMs), it is consistent with Soviet interests in 600 km cruise missile limitations on SLCMs and ALCMs on non-heavy bombers. The Soviets have recently sought 600 km limits on GLCMs as well; we could accept (and might even prefer) this figure, but the 1500 km range is a compromise limit that preserves our option for medium-range GLCMs in Western Europe, which may be warranted politically, although questionable on military grounds. This package seeks a balanced solution to Backfire through the use of collateral constraints plus a Soviet production statement. In our view, this package is acceptable to the US, offers arms control benefits, and has a reasonably good chance of being negotiable.

° Settlement 4. This package emerged as an approach the SCC as a whole wished to examine more closely. By permitting ALCMs at 2500 km on heavy bombers with platform limitations, it protects the cruise missile program of most interest to the United States, while placing strict limits of 300 km on all other cruise missiles. This package maximizes arms control objectives more than the others. To be acceptable to Moscow, it may necessitate a "grandfather clause" to permit the Soviets to retain their sizable force of cruise missiles of ranges in excess of 300 km. But such an exception (unless temporary) would create verification problems, make it less meaningful as an arms control measure, and be less desirable to the United States. At the Soviet proposed 600 km limit, the problem of a "grandfather clause" does not present itself.

° Counting Backfire. The Joint Chiefs, supported by OSD, insisted that this package be included as a viable option. It calls for counting Backfire in the aggregate above the level of 120, and relatively loose

range limits on all types of cruise missiles. We view this package to be undesirable and non-negotiable.

-- Significant reductions. This approach to central systems would involve reductions in the aggregate to 2000, with preferential reductions in MLBMs of 100-150 and a drop in the MIRV launcher level to 1200. The associated cruise missile/Backfire packages for this approach differ from those associated with Vladivostok levels, although some packages appear under both approaches. Again, there are five such packages (see Tab 2):

° Settlement 1. This package is identical to the package appearing under Vladivostok levels. In our view, it is significantly less negotiable under the case of preferential reductions due to the relatively relaxed cruise missile limits compared to other packages and the relatively tight Backfire limits, since the Soviets would be hit harder than the US in central system reductions by being asked to reduce the MLBMs.

° Settlement 2. This package appears in a variant form under the preferential reductions case. Because of the lower MIRVed launcher level compared to the Vladivostok approach, ALCMs on heavy bombers would not be counted in the MIRVed limit but would be subject to a separate limit of 170 platforms (corresponding to our existing B-52 Gs). Without this variation, the US would be forced to take greater reductions in MIRVed ICBMs in order to permit a reasonable force of heavy bombers with ALCMs. This was judged to be an unnecessary burden on the US, while the alternative formulation of a reasonably justifiable separate platform limit was judged to be potentially acceptable to the Soviets. We believe that Settlement 2, even in its variant form, makes sense from the point of view of US security, arms control, and negotiability.

° Settlement 3 appears under the case of preferential reductions, although it did not appear under the Vladivostok level approach. It is favored by ACDA, on the grounds that a single limit of 1500 km on all types of cruise missiles simplifies verification and definition problems. Militarily it is tighter on some elements than some cruise missile packages and looser on others. As in the case

of Settlement 2, it would treat Backfire through collateral constraints plus a production statement. The negotiability of this package is uncertain, as is its effect on US military requirements. We question its arms control value since it would permit the Soviets to upgrade their SLCM capabilities to 1500 km and to develop 1500 km ALCMs for their medium as well as strategic bombers.

° Settlement 4. This package appears again under significant reductions and seems to make sense under both central system approaches. In the reduction case, however, the US might be less unwilling to constrain its cruise missiles or to permit a "grandfather clause" to exclude certain classes of Soviet cruise missiles, if this is judged to be a price worth paying to gain Soviet acceptance of preferential MLBM reductions.

° Count Backfire. The JCS, supported by OSD, insisted that this package also be included under the preferential reductions case. We believe it to be even less meaningful to include this option in the case of preferential reductions, given the need to contemplate realistic US concessions to obtain Soviet agreement to reduce MLBMs preferentially.

-- Land-Mobile ICBMs. The tables at Tabs 1 and 2 do not include proposed positions on mobile missiles. It is open as to whether these systems would be banned or limited and counted under the two basic central system approaches and in connection with the specific cruise missile/Backfire packages. Our view continues to be that a ban on deployment and possibly testing is desirable under either basic approach, and especially in a negotiating context tied to attempts to gain preferential reductions and involving an explicit US decision to withhold M-X deployment until past the mid-1980s. It is possible, however, to approach this question in discussions with the Soviets without a fixed US position, reserving our options until after the Soviet view is obtained and the broad context of a possible agreement begins to emerge.

-- Deferral. The major rationale for deferral, an option in which the President has expressed interest, is that a resolution of the Backfire and cruise missile

issues should not stand in the way of timely conclusion of a SALT TWO agreement which limits the most important strategic systems. Because both issues are difficult and contentious, such resolution may not be possible this year. Deferral of these issues could also support a view that Backfire and cruise missiles are not central systems, but are "gray area" systems which are not suited to the SALT arms control forum.

The Soviets rejected the US deferral proposal of February, 1976 (which included significant limits on ALCMs and production and upgrade limits on Backfire). Although a deferral proposal might ultimately be accepted by the Soviets, it would probably not lead to a prompt conclusion of the SALT TWO negotiations. Deferral could greatly reduce the value of an agreement and lead to widespread criticism that the sides had merely opened up the opportunity to circumvent the value of constraints on ballistic missiles and heavy bombers through unconstrained competition in cruise missiles. Moreover, it would be more difficult to deal with these systems at a later stage, and deferral also would complicate efforts to reach more substantial central system reductions in SALT THREE.

The interagency paper considers four possible specific alternative approaches to the deferral concept:

1. Omission from SALT TWO with intention to resolve these issues in SALT THREE.
2. Loose constraints (e.g., ban cruise missiles over 3000 km and prohibit refueling and Arctic basing for Backfire), pending negotiation of more substantial limitations.
3. Loose constraints of limited duration (e.g., 1-3 years) pending a more definitive solution.
4. Partial cruise missile deferral (e.g., limit cruise missiles on submarines and non-heavy bombers to 600 km and defer others to SALT THREE).

These options of course differ in their probable negotiability and, in some cases, approach those "settlement" packages with rather loose constraints.

All options, however, have essentially no impact on US or Soviet programs. We continue to view deferral more as a fallback or a negotiating play than as a US policy goal at this time.

-- Deep Reductions. Reductions in the 2400 central systems aggregate to 1000-1500 and reduction in the MIRV aggregate to 1000 were considered. While recognizing the political and arms control benefits of such reductions, the paper is not enthusiastic in its support. It notes that the survivability of ICBM silos would not be improved and that the US could not expect to realize significant economic savings from such reductions. Sensitivity to such factors as non-limited forces on both sides, third-country forces, verification uncertainties and civil defense would be increased. Further, those who are concerned about throw-weight point to an increasing asymmetry as levels are reduced. Deep reductions accompanied by additional qualitative constraints (on numbers of warheads, numbers of flight test, throw-weight, ASW, etc.) may be more attractive than simply reducing the two aggregates.

We believe the objections raised in the paper are somewhat overdrawn. Nevertheless, they are indicative of the disputes and problems that would be raised within the USG were such reductions to become a concrete US position at this time. In addition, there exist probably serious negotiating problems which the paper does not address. Thus, we continue to view reductions of this magnitude as a US goal for SALT THREE and not as a realistic objective for a SALT TWO agreement to be concluded this year.

-- 300/2500 km Cruise Missile Limit. In a separate paper, we analyze a ban on all cruise missiles over 300 km range, excepting ALCMs on heavy bombers which would be limited to 2500 km range.

Such a ban, if accepted and implemented, would require destruction of about a thousand Soviet cruise missiles of 300-600 km range (about one-third the total cruise missile force), and no existing American ones. This impact would, of course, make the proposal much less negotiable unless a "grandfather clause" permitted retention of existing numbers of Soviet systems --



and even then it would impinge on two current Soviet deployment programs and no American ones. By extending the limitations to anti-shipping and other tactical systems, this option could also be vulnerable to Soviet claims that it transcends the strategic arms focus to SALT and to Soviet efforts to reintroduce US FBS (especially on aircraft carriers) into the negotiations.

This approach would, by exception, allow the major desired US strategic cruise missile systems -- ALCMs on heavy bombers. It would not, however, allow possible theater strike cruise missiles of interest to the US and US-supplied allies.

In sum, it would probably be in our net interest, but negotiability would be low unless Soviet systems were excluded, which would diminish its interest to us.

SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS

The key points you might raise include the following:

-- Sensible SALT TWO proposals must be formed by balancing four considerations: (1) interest in maintaining major US programs; (2) interest in constraining certain Soviet programs; (3) enhancing arms control objectives in the near-term, SALT THREE, and beyond, through negotiable US positions; and (4) the broader-gauged political dimensions of SALT.

-- We need not automatically accept past US or Soviet proposals and positions, but we must recognize the existence of a negotiating record that achieved important understandings.

-- Preferential reductions of MLBMs and MIRVed levels of 1250, as part of aggregate reductions to 2000, have merit. But an agreement at approximately Vladivostok levels can be acceptable and might be the only available near-term solution.

-- Deep reductions (to 1500) are desirable but would not seem to be practicable or negotiable in SALT TWO. A successful SALT TWO negotiation could be a springboard for a SALT THREE effort to achieve such reduction.

-- Backfire is simply not a heavy bomber; counting it in the aggregate is not only non-negotiable, but

unnecessary if the Soviets accept reasonable collateral constraints and offer production statements. It also risks reopening the FBS issue.

-- However it may be defined, deferral of cruise missile and Backfire limits would make more difficult future agreements to limit these systems and complicate reaching more substantial central system limits in SALT THREE; it is best reserved as a "fall-back" if an adequate solution cannot be obtained in SALT TWO.

-- Options aimed at protecting 2500 km GLCMs for the US may not be necessary or in our net interest; other responses to the Soviet theater nuclear threat are available, and Soviet development of comparable systems could complicate NATO's security.

-- The proposed cruise missile solution applying a 1500 km range limit to all types has the advantage of simplicity, but the disadvantages of not preserving our key program (2500 km ALCMs) and of permitting the Soviets to upgrade their cruise missile capabilities (e.g., 1500 km SLCMs threatening the US).

-- Compromise solutions along the lines of settlements 2 and 4 protect key US cruise missile programs, limit important Soviet cruise missile options (e.g., long-range SLCMs and GLCMs), and make sense as arms control measures consistent with central systems approaches.

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Approximate Vladivostok Levels

Aggregate	2300
MIRV Level	1320
Throw Weight	No MLBM reductions

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Backfire	Deferral	Collateral Constraints plus a separate limit of 300	Collateral Constraints plus Soviet production statement.	Count in aggregate above 120.	
Cruise Missiles	Defferal	Settlement 1 -- ban all cruise missiles above 2500-5500 km.  -- ban GLCMs and surface ship SLCMs above 2500 km, separate limit of 300 Backfire plus 600-2500 km GLCM and surface ship SLCMs.  -- ban other cruise missiles above 600 km.	Settlement 2 ban ALCMs on heavy bombers above 2500 km, count platforms in the 1320 MIRV total.  -- ban GLCMs above 1500 km.  -- ban other cruise missiles above 600 km.	Settlement 4 -- ban ALCMs on heavy bombers above 2500 km, with some limit on platforms  -- ban other cruise missiles above 300 km.	Loose Constraints -- ban all cruise missiles above 2500-300 km.
Mobile ICBMs	?				

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TABLE IVb: ILLUSTRATIVE SALT PACKAGES

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Significant Reductions in the  
Aggregate, MIRV, and MLBM levels

Aggregate	2000				
MIRV Level	1200				
Throw Weight	Preferential Reduction of MLBMs (i.e., 100-150)				
Backfire	Collateral Constraints plus a separate limit of 300.	Collateral Constraints plus Soviet production statement.			Count in aggregate above 120.
Cruise Missiles	<p>Settlement 1</p> <p>-- ban ALCMs on heavy bombers above 2500 km, separate limit of 270 platforms.</p> <p>-- ban GLCMs and surface ship SLCMs above 2500 km, separate limit of 300 Backfire plus platforms for 600-2500 km GLCMs and surface ship SLCMs.</p> <p>-- ban other cruise missiles above 600 km.</p>	<p>Settlement 2 variant</p> <p>-- ban ALCMs on heavy bombers above 2500 km, sublimit of 170 platforms.</p> <p>-- ban GLCMs above 1500 km.</p> <p>-- ban other cruise missiles above 600 km.</p>	<p>Settlement 3</p> <p>-- ban all cruise missiles above 1500 km.</p>	<p>Settlement 4</p> <p>-- ban ALCMs on heavy bombers above 2500 km, with some limit on platforms.</p> <p>-- ban other cruise missiles above 300 km.</p>	Loose Constraints  -- ban all cruise missiles above 2500-3000 km.
Mobile ICBMs	?				