

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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November 3, 1986

NATIONAL SECURITY DECISION  
DIRECTIVE NUMBER 250

POST-REYKJAVIK FOLLOW-UP (U)

At my meeting with General Secretary Gorbachev in Reykjavik, Iceland, on October 11, 1986, we were able to reach a series of understandings that will serve as the foundation for future progress in a number of areas. With respect to nuclear arms control matters, the common ground that exists between positions of the two sides was substantially expanded in both the START and INF areas. A path toward progress was also uncovered in the area of nuclear testing. However, as we neared the end of the time allotted for our second day of discussions, the General Secretary placed great emphasis on the Soviet need for the United States to agree not to exercise its existing right to withdraw from the ABM Treaty for a period of time in excess of 10 years. At the same time, he asked me to accept additional restrictions on some aspects of our SDI program that go well beyond the existing treaty restrictions. He ultimately tied making further progress at that meeting, even on those areas of understanding which we had already reached, to US willingness to make such a commitment with respect to a "strengthened" ABM Treaty. (U)

I did not intend to leave Reykjavik with any potential path to progress left unexplored. Therefore, I told the General Secretary that, for the US part, we would be willing to consider any approach as long as it did not demand of us that we compromise our fundamental principles, our security and that of our allies, or our hopes for a more stable future through a transition to an increased reliance on defenses that threaten no one. (U)

Further, I made it clear that I believed that we should make progress in each substantive arms control area based on the individual merits of the understandings reached in that area. We should not hold the potential increased mutual benefits to security and stability achievable by such progress hostage to either side's desires in other areas of discussion. (U)

With respect to the specific Soviet demand for a US commitment not to exercise our existing right to withdraw from the ABM Treaty, I explained that a blanket commitment to waive all rights of withdrawal would not be acceptable and that any US attempt to meet Soviet concerns in this regard should not be interpreted by the Soviet Union as US readiness to forfeit its existing right to withdraw from the ABM Treaty due to supreme national interest or in the face of material breach of the treaty by a party. (U)

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Therefore, as an attempt to see if I could find a way to respond to the General Secretary's concern in a manner that met the criteria outlined above, I reviewed the various elements of the previous US proposals to see if they could be reformulated in a novel way so as to meet both US and Soviet concerns. As a result of this effort, I offered the following initial proposal which laid out the conditions under which I was prepared to consider meeting the basic thrust of the Soviet request. (U)

Both sides would agree to confine themselves to research, development and testing, which is permitted by the ABM Treaty, for a period of 5 years, through 1991, during which time a 50% reduction of strategic nuclear arsenals would be achieved. This being done, both sides will continue the pace of reductions with respect to all remaining offensive ballistic missiles with the goal of the total elimination of all offensive ballistic missiles by the end of the second five-year period. As long as these reductions continue at the appropriate pace, the same restrictions will continue to apply. At the end of the ten-year period, with all offensive ballistic missiles eliminated, either side would be free to deploy defenses. (U)

The General Secretary responded to this with the following Soviet proposal. (U)

The USSR and the United States undertake for ten years not to exercise their existing right of withdrawal from the ABM Treaty, which is of unlimited duration, and during that period strictly to observe all its provisions. The testing in space of all space components of missile defense is prohibited, except research and testing conducted in laboratories. Within the first five years of the ten-year period (and thus through 1991), the strategic offensive arms of the two sides shall be reduced by 50 percent. During the following five years of that period, the remaining 50 percent of the two sides strategic offensive arms shall be reduced. Thus by the end of 1996, the strategic offensive arms of the USSR and the United States will have been totally eliminated. (U)

This Soviet proposal was clearly unacceptable in a number of respects. It sought to have the US accept restrictions on research on advanced defenses well beyond those specified in the existing ABM Treaty. It redefined the conditions for the subsequent five-year period to involve the elimination of all strategic forces of the US and the Soviet Union. And, it did not include a positive commitment that, following the ten-year period, either side would then begin the transition to increased reliance on advanced defenses. (U)

Having evaluated the Soviet offer, I again attempted to find an appropriate bridge between the US and Soviet positions. In this effort, I tried to use as much as possible of the Soviet proposal. The result was the following second US offer which was designed to correct the key problems associated with the Soviet proposal while making it clear that in this context the US was prepared to meet what was perceived to be the central Soviet concern by an appropriately limited US commitment not to exercise its existing right to withdraw from the ABM Treaty through 1996 for the purpose of deploying advanced defenses. It was this US offer which was the US offer of record when the discussions ended without further agreement. (U)

The USSR and the United States undertake for ten years not to exercise their existing right of withdrawal from the ABM Treaty, which is of unlimited duration, and during that period strictly to observe all its provisions while continuing research, development and testing, which are permitted by the ABM Treaty. Within the first five years of the ten-year period (and thus through 1991), the strategic offensive arms of the two sides shall be reduced by 50 percent. During the following five years of that period, the remaining offensive ballistic missiles of the two sides shall be reduced. Thus by the end of 1996, all offensive ballistic missiles of the USSR and the United States will have been totally eliminated. At the end of the ten year period, either side could deploy defenses if it so chose unless the parties agree otherwise. (U)

Eliminating All Offensive Ballistic Missiles At the heart of the last US proposal made at Reykjavik is the expressed US commitment to join a bilateral agreement to delay any deployment of US and Soviet advanced defenses against ballistic missiles until after the elimination of all US and Soviet offensive ballistic missiles, with this US commitment made in return for a corresponding Soviet commitment to join a parallel bilateral agreement to complete this elimination within a specific period of time. The ten-year period of the US proposal was associated with the period through 1996 because I will not permit the possibility of the US moving to a more stable deterrent, unilaterally if need be, to slip further into the future. This specific ten-year period was chosen to balance the Soviet desire to have the US commitment not to deploy defenses for as long as possible against the US desire to find an appropriate means of eliminating the threat currently posed by offensive ballistic missiles as quickly as possible. (U)

The elimination of offensive ballistic missiles is not a new objective for the US. In 1983, when I announced the establishment of the SDI program I did so with the specific objective of making offensive ballistic missiles obsolete. It was examined as a part of our review and response to the

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proposals made by General Secretary Gorbachev in January, 1986, which went beyond this to call for the total elimination of all nuclear weapons within the next 14 years. In short, it is an objective that we have studied and discussed both within the US government and with our allies, most recently in the deliberations that led to my July 25, 1986, letter to General Secretary Gorbachev. (U)

In the preparations for that letter, I initially focused on my desire to make a concrete proposal which would formalize my offer to share the benefits of advanced defenses with the Soviet Union, should our research into such defenses meet the objectives that we have set. However, when considering this idea, the Secretary of Defense correctly pointed out that it made little sense to commit to share the benefits of advanced defenses with the Soviet Union if the Soviet Union insisted on continuing to retain large numbers of offensive ballistic missiles which would, in turn, attempt to defeat our defenses. After discussion and study by my principal advisors, it was agreed that the new US proposal should contain a specific call for a plan for the elimination of all offensive ballistic missiles. Therefore, my July 25 letter to the General Secretary was framed to incorporate this objective as a key element of the new US proposal presented in that letter. After full consultation with our allies on this and the other elements of the proposal to be contained in this correspondence, I finalized and sent the letter.

Additionally, the objective of the elimination of all offensive ballistic missiles is consistent with what we have been trying to do for some time both in START and in INF, and also with the fundamental goal that I specifically set for the SDI program. (U)

With respect to the START negotiations, our position has long been that while each side may need nuclear forces for some time to deter conflict and underwrite its security, neither side needs fast-flying, non-recallable offensive ballistic missiles for this purpose. From the very first, in START, we have been trying to draw a clear distinction between fast-flying ballistic systems, which are uniquely suited for an attempted first-strike by an aggressor, and slow-flying systems which are better suited for deterrence through the prospect of retaliation. As a result, we have been attempting to focus on reductions in ballistic missile warheads (which also are an area of Soviet advantage) as the heart of the issue to be resolved, and have addressed restrictions on slow-flying systems largely as means to meet Soviet concerns. (U)

In the INF negotiations, we have taken a similar position. We have kept the focus on missiles, and avoided discussion of dual-capable, tactical aircraft. We proposed the zero-zero solution for the LRINF missile problem. We have called for the similar reduction and elimination of shorter-range ballistic

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missiles, missiles that pose as direct a threat to our Allies and our forces deployed in support of those allies, as Soviet ICBMs do to the United States. (U)

With respect to the Strategic Defense Initiative, my specific, stated goal has always been to make ballistic missiles obsolete. Here, again, our focus has been on promptly eliminating the threat posed by these fast-flying missiles. (U)

In Iceland, at the critical point of attempting to find a response to Soviet concerns which would not compromise our principles, our security, or our future, I drew upon previously completed work with respect to the objective of eliminating the threat posed by offensive ballistic missiles, and I incorporated this objective into my response to the Soviet call for a ten-year period of non-withdrawal from the ABM Treaty. By doing so, we undercut any Soviet objection to our having the right to deploy defenses as insurance, since we would have committed to delay until all offensive ballistic missiles of the two superpowers should have been eliminated. By calling for the elimination of offensive ballistic missiles of all ranges we also, in one step, addressed the problem of eliminating both the last 100 Soviet SS-20 warheads in Asia (a concern of our Asian allies) and the remaining shorter-range ICBF missiles that still would threaten our European allies (a particular concern of our German allies). (C)

An Alternative Future Should the Soviets accept the proposal I offered in Reykjavik, we would face a substantially different future than that we anticipate today. At the end of the ten-year period specified in the offer, neither the United States nor the Soviet Union would possess any offensive ballistic missiles. When adequate advanced defenses are deployed, they should provide insurance against the return or covert retention of such missiles and guard against third country ballistic missiles. Strategic nuclear retaliatory forces, although smaller than today and of a different composition, would remain and would retain their essential role in ensuring US and allied security. (U)

With respect to strategic forces, by the end of 1996 the United States and Soviet Union could retain no more than 50 percent of today's strategic nuclear offensive forces. These forces would consist exclusively of bombers and cruise missiles. Since the major portions of forces of the United States and Soviet Union would be covered by agreements that would reduce these forces to equal levels (unlike the situation today), these forces should provide a sufficient strategic retaliatory capability to deter attack on the United States or its allies while eliminating the crisis stability problems inherent in the short time of flight ballistic missiles. At the same time, elimination of ballistic missiles on both sides would drastically

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reduce the Soviet first strike potential and, to the extent Soviet fears of a US first strike are genuinely felt, would alleviate such concerns. (U)

With respect to our commitment to NATO, the remaining strategic nuclear systems would also provide the US nuclear umbrella over NATO which has been one of the pillars of NATO's strategy for decades. Not only would the US commitment to NATO's agreed strategy, as embodied in MC 14/3, remain, but the elimination of the ballistic missile threat to the United States and to NATO should increase the credibility of both NATO's ability to execute its strategy and the US commitment to use nuclear weapons, if necessary, in accordance with that strategy in support of the alliance. (U)

The United States presently contributes to all legs of the "NATO triad": conventional forces, non-strategic nuclear forces, and strategic forces. That contribution would continue. Nuclear artillery and nuclear weapons on dual capable aircraft would continue to fill the twin deterrent roles of helping offset Soviet conventional superiority and serving as a link to strategic forces. Thus, while it will be essential to continue (or accelerate) current NATO initiatives to improve conventional capability, it will be equally essential for the foreseeable future to keep some nuclear forces (both strategic and non-strategic) to permit the United States and its allies to maintain the deterrence which is the heart of the NATO strategy set forth in MC 14/3. (U)

With respect to the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) program, it is clear that in the alternative future that such an agreement would provide, the requirements that SDI would have to meet would be altered substantially. Deployments of advanced defenses against ballistic missiles could be sized to provide the insurance that we need against both any existing or potential third country threats and against the covert retention of ballistic systems by the Soviet Union. Even if ballistic missiles were covertly retained, only certain elements of such systems could be covertly tested (e.g. boosters under the guise of space launch systems). It would be extremely difficult covertly to test offensive ballistic missiles as integrated combat systems in a surface-to-surface mode in such an environment. Therefore, confidence in the overall reliability of such systems would degrade over time. Also, without the ability to conduct developmental testing of new offensive ballistic missile systems, the problem of the defense having to constantly stay ahead of a technologically evolving ballistic missile threat may also be greatly reduced. In short, the size, complexity, and technological difficulty of fielding a militarily meaningful defensive system against any residual ballistic missile threat will be substantially different. If the US proposal were accepted and implemented, these factors may be reduced to the

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point that, even based on the progress made in SDI to date, there would be little question that a scaled-down defense will be adequate and feasible under those future conditions. (U)

We can consider the possibility of more limited requirements for defense if ballistic missiles are actually eliminated. On the other hand, even if the Soviets were to accept the proposal that I made in Reykjavik, we will continue to need the leverage and protection produced by the possibility of being able to develop a system capable of handling a much more extensive and evolving offensive ballistic threat. (U)

Deterrence in such a future. The basic concept of deterrence in such an alternative future need not be altered. (U)

Deterrence can best be achieved if our defense posture makes Soviet assessments of war outcomes so uncertain as to remove any incentive for initiating attack. This would require that we possess a mix of military forces, including those nuclear and conventional forces providing defensive and retaliatory capabilities, that the Soviets will view as giving us the ability to deny them their political and military objectives. (U)

In short, deterrence of aggression is also achieved by maximizing an aggressor's uncertainty that he can achieve political objectives by force, and the certainty that he will face grave risk to things that he values most should he try. Certainly, the tools for maintaining deterrence will change. The challenge and opportunity that we face is to determine how best to channel that change. (U)

The potential impact of eliminating ballistic missiles on deterrence. The elimination of offensive ballistic missiles offers the possibility of enhancing deterrence because the slower pace associated with the employment of bomber and cruise missile forces makes their effective use by an aggressor in a first strike much more difficult. The effects of such an attempt are also much more uncertain. At the same time, it should be recognized that the certainty of the ability of the US to respond to a first strike with strategic forces which are not degraded by that attempted attack is considerably higher when both sides have only slow flying systems. These considerations should be factored into evaluations of the military sufficiency of alternative forces to deter and to respond to a first strike. (U)

In today's world, or in a future that builds on today's trends, ballistic missiles are uniquely suited to be employed by an aggressor with relatively certain results. The time between the detection of a ballistic missile attack and its arrival is so short that it freezes the situation, reducing the options of the

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party attacked so that they can be largely anticipated by an aggressor. Facing no defenses, there can be little doubt that, if ballistic missiles function reliably, they will arrive on target. Finally, predicting the specific levels of damage they can inflict on a target is largely a matter of physics. Their effectiveness does not depend on the skill, courage or training of men in the loop. It depends on the technological reliability of the system which can be tested and measured in peacetime. (U)

If such systems were eliminated, the uncertainty in the mind of an aggressor must increase because of the loss of their unique characteristics. Provided that we take steps to ensure that other forms of attack are not permitted to rebuild that certainty over time, the result can be a significant net gain in terms of the quality of deterrence and, in turn, in our security and that of our allies. In considering the requirements for maintaining deterrence in such a future world, a high premium should be placed on identifying, determining the feasibility of, and taking such steps. (U)

Measuring the Impact on Deterrence. In measuring our ability to deter in an alternative future, we must take into account the elimination of the contribution of our own ballistic missiles and the corresponding relative increase in the degree of our uncertainty in predicting the effectiveness of our retaliatory strike, should deterrence fail. But at the same time, we must also properly reflect in our measurements the contribution that this same inherent uncertainty makes in deterring an aggressor. We should also consider the even more fundamental contribution that is made to our security should we face an aggressor who is not rational or finds himself placed in an irrational situation by events that have gotten beyond his control, but who is armed only with systems against which we can build a reasonable defense should we choose to do so. We must also weigh the real and immediate benefits of removing an immense, existing threat to the United States that is literally only thirty minutes away. Nor can we forget that, unlike Soviet stated policy, US strategic and nuclear forces are intended to make an explicitly identified contribution to the deterrence of conventional attack on our Allies and our forces deployed in support of our Allies. (U)

In accomplishing this measurement, to the extent practical, we should attempt to approach the problem from the point of view of a net assessment of all considerations involved. Our present analytic tools will fall short of resolving all the questions such an alternative future presents. Therefore, until new methods adapted to the challenges and opportunities of this alternative future are fully developed, we will have to depend heavily on the experience, expertise, resourcefulness, creativity, and judgment of our professional military and defense community. I believe that this, too, plays into a significant aspect of our strength. (U)

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The Immediate Task Ahead. At this time, it is not clear whether the Soviet Union will have the wisdom to accept the US proposal which I made in Reykjavik. The main thrust of our national security planning and military programming should not be altered now in anticipation of such an uncertain possibility. In fact, if we were prematurely to adjust our current military plans and programs for either the modernization of our own ballistic missile forces or to limit the scope of our SDI program, the Soviet Union would certainly attempt to pocket these actions without a reciprocal response on their part. Unilateral action of this sort would be counterproductive and dangerous. It would not only reduce the likelihood of our convincing the Soviet Union to join us in the approach to a future elimination of offensive ballistic missiles contained in my Reykjavik proposals, but it would also reduce our security and that of our allies. (U)

However, I want to ensure that we are prepared to exploit, fully and safely, our proposal should the Soviet Union be willing to join us in its pursuit. In order to do so, the necessary foundation of detailed, careful planning must be laid now. Therefore, I request the Joint Chiefs of Staff, under direction of the Secretary of Defense and drawing upon other agencies as necessary, to provide a plan which would permit the US to safely transition to the alternative future I have proposed. (C)

The nature of the plan. This plan should catalogue the necessary national security requirements to support the implementation of the negotiated elimination of offensive ballistic missiles by 1991 as proposed in the last US offer made at Reykjavik. It should fully take into account the discussion of deterrence that I have provided above. Having done so, it should propose programmatic and non-programmatic approaches -- including changes in military strategy and tactics, force structure and posture, and additional supportive arms control/reduction initiatives -- which could be used to meet and fulfill those requirements. The identification of multiple and competing approaches to meeting requirements is encouraged. If alternative paths or methods exist, they should be presented. Finally, the resource implications of all alternatives should be estimated and provided with the alternatives. (C)

Assumptions. In developing this plan, the following assumptions should be used: (U)

- With respect to the 50 percent reductions in strategic forces to be taken in the first five years:
  1. there will be no sublimit on heavy bombers within the 1,600 ceiling on the number of SNDs; and
  2. within the 5,000 ceiling associated with ballistic missile warheads, air-launched cruise missiles, and (indirectly) other bomber weapons:
    - (a) there will be no sublimit on LCMs;

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- (b) each ALCM on a heavy bomber counts as one warhead;
- (c) all the gravity bombs and SRAM on a single heavy bomber counts as one warhead; and
- (d) SLCMs will not be included in this number. (C)

-- The US and Soviet Union will eliminate all offensive ballistic missiles by 1996. As a departure point for planning, the term offensive ballistic missiles should be applied to ballistic missiles of all ranges and carrying any type of weapon designed for use in a surface-to-surface mode. Air-to-surface missiles that employ ballistic trajectories should not be included. Artillery, rocket assisted artillery rounds, and rocket assisted ASW systems should also not be included. Recommendations with respect to alternative or additional limitations on the term "offensive ballistic missile" are encouraged. (S)

-- While eliminating offensive ballistic missiles, the United States will not abandon the concept of strategic nuclear deterrence. (U)

-- The strategic policy and targeting priorities of NSDD-13 should be considered as an initial baseline. They should be critically reviewed in the context of the purposes of the development of this plan. Recommendations concerning alternative formulations which may be more appropriate for a ballistic missile free world are encouraged. These alternatives should be provided as soon as possible so that they can be reviewed and, if considered appropriate, approved for use for this planning activity. However, it remains US policy not to attack civilian population per se. (S)

-- It will continue to be an objective of US policy to retain a nuclear reserve force, including a secure reserve component, of appropriate size and composition. (TS)

-- The Strategic Defense Initiative will be given adequate resources to ensure the deployment of effective advanced strategic defenses can be made if and when required, and to hedge against Soviet cheating. The US may choose to deploy a treaty-compliant defense (e.g., perhaps using ERIS type technology as an initial limited ABM system and for its related ASAT capability, and/or an ATBM capability) at any time that such a defense is useful prior to 1996. The US will deploy appropriate defenses which can go beyond the restrictions of the ABM Treaty after 1996 if it is in the US interest to do so. The Soviet Union will deploy comparable defenses. (TS)

-- The NATO strategy embodied in MC 14/3 will remain in effect and be fully supported by the United States. The current NATO efforts to raise the nuclear threshold through conventional improvements will continue. (U)

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-- For the purpose of this plan, the total resources available to the Department of Defense will not exceed current planning levels, with a rate of growth thereafter not to exceed three percent in real terms. However, the reorientation of priorities may be considered within those totals. Should the JCS consider additional resources essential, they should so indicate as an excursion to their baseline plan. (S)

-- The military capabilities associated with this plan will be acquired under peacetime, non-mobilization conditions. Where this guideline, constraints on our industrial capacity, or constraints on non-fiscal resources (ranging from availability of trained manpower to the availability of special nuclear materials) impact upon achieving desired force levels, this fact should be explicitly indicated, with a clear identification of the governing constraint. (C)

-- In Soviet acceptance of the proposals made in Reykjavik which would open the possibility of the projected alternative future in question, the Soviet Union would also agree to monitoring as necessary to permit effective verification of their compliance. (U)

-- This being said, the US plan for implementing the ten-year path to the negotiated elimination of ballistic missiles should be such that should the Soviet Union not act in accord with the agreement reached, the United States could stop the reductions and elimination process, and take additional responses as necessary, at any step along the way without unacceptable risk. (U)

Initial progress report. In developing this plan, an initial progress report should be submitted not later than December 1, 1986, which addresses the following:

-- initial recommendations, if any, with respect to national policy guidance and strategy for the employment of nuclear and non-nuclear forces that should be considered in the development of such an plan;

-- an explanation of the analytic methodology planned for evaluating risk and for effectiveness in support of the development of the plan, recognizing, as mentioned earlier, that military expertise and judgment will play a critically important role accomplishing the overall task;

-- a description of the initial basic planning assumptions that will be made concerning friendly forces available during the period in question, corresponding hostile forces, critical missions to be accomplished; and, the general number and characteristics of the targets associated with these missions;

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-- a method for appropriately folding into this planning process the contribution of highly compartmented programs while maintaining their security; and

-- an estimate, submitted for my approval, of the date upon which this plan will be available for my final review. (TS)

Issues to be addressed in the full plan. The final completed plan should address at a minimum:

-- recommendations on the appropriate phasing of the elimination of US ballistic missiles by 1996 in the context of the US proposal, and those steps which we could take to ensure that the phasing of the elimination of Soviet ballistic missiles is accomplished in an appropriate manner (and preferably in a manner advantageous to US and Allied security);

-- recommendations on specific changes in strategic nuclear force employment strategy and related force structure made necessary by the elimination of both US and Soviet offensive ballistic missiles;

-- recommendations on the role and scope of deployments of advanced strategic defenses against ballistic missiles (both treaty compliant before 1996 and those not currently permitted by the ABM Treaty after 1996 that may be required, and the potential timing and implications of these deployments;

-- recommendations on the role and scope of deployments of advanced strategic defenses against bomber and cruise missile attack that may be required, and the potential timing and implications of such deployments (considering both the use of traditional technologies and the potential contribution that could be made to a more cost-effective solution by advanced, compartmented systems and spin-offs from the SDI program);

-- recommendations on the role of advanced technologies (e.g., low observables) in countering existing and improved Soviet defenses against bomber and cruise missile attack both to ensure the effectiveness of US retaliatory forces and to offset the potential Soviet advantage in existing investments in air defense;

-- recommendations on other additional strategic capabilities that may be needed (e.g., increased C3I, ASAT capability, etc.);

-- recommendations on similar changes in the associated strategy for the employment, deployment and structural development of non-strategic nuclear, chemical, and conventional forces;

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-- recommendations on additional general purpose capabilities that may be needed (e.g., increased ASW capability);

-- recommendations on additional improvements in any area needed to ensure that the effectiveness of our strategic deterrent relative to NATO and our overall military capability to meet NATO and other alliance commitments are maintained;

-- recommendations on how we can best use technological advantage to implement competitive strategies in support of this plan;

-- recommendations on how other existing arms control proposals, including in the conventional area, could be made more supportive of national security as a consequence of the elimination of ballistic missiles;

-- recommendations concerning how we can best address the US commitment to pursue in START limitations on SLCMs with the Soviet Union in the context of this plan; and

-- recommendations on additional arms control proposals, including: measures which could help minimize the potential danger of other forms of militarily significant, short-notice attack (to include cruise missiles) after the elimination of ballistic missiles is achieved; proposals for scheduling the drawdown of forces restricted by negotiated agreement in manners which further enhance security and stability; and additional approaches in the conventional area. (U)

Treatment of Risk. In formulating the alternatives and making the assessments associated with this plan, the objective of the baseline plan should be to hold overall levels of risk generally constant. It is unlikely that the risk could be kept genuinely constant in the projected environment which will be continually changing over the ten-year period. On the other hand, every effort should be made to avoid even short periods of greatly increased risk and to remain within a band of acceptable risk using today's levels as the departure point. (U)

An appropriate methodology for measuring risk over the period being considered will be required to ensure this objective is met. Sources of greatest risk and uncertainty should be documented as they are identified and addressed in the development of the plan. (U)

Alternatives that reduce risk at no significant cost can and should be included within the baseline plan. Alternatives that reduce overall levels of military risk from current or anticipated levels (as measured assuming currently planned or programmed forces), and that significantly increase the cost or difficulty of achieving an executable baseline plan can also be

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considered and presented. However, these should be presented as excursions to the baseline plan. (U)

Associated Taskings. It goes without saying that the assurance of effective verification is essential to our entering into the arms control agreements that are assumed as the backdrop for the above tasking. Therefore, the Director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and the Director of Central Intelligence, with the participation and drawing upon the assistance of other appropriate agencies, should prepare a supporting plan which recommends a preferred path, and alternative paths where appropriate, for achieving the effective verification of the assumed arms control agreements. (U)

Additionally, the Director of Central Intelligence should provide:

-- an assessment of the Soviet Union's intentions and capability, both military and economic, to satisfy its own national strategy and strategic force objectives;

-- an assessment of the intentions and potential capabilities of other countries which currently have, or could obtain, ballistic missiles; and

-- an assessment of the intelligence resources needed both to monitor Soviet compliance in such an alternative future and to support the evolving projected US military requirements associated with that future. (S)

Implementation. The objective is the optimal executable plan, with alternative paths where appropriate, which would permit me to move quickly to exploit any Soviet willingness to join us in the proposal involving the elimination of offensive ballistic missiles within ten years which I made in Reykjavik. This should be completed on a priority basis. (U)

Access to this NSDD and to the resulting products should be limited only to those with a clear need to know about and assist in the development of each individual product. (U)

*Ronald Reagan*

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