

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

October 28, 1982

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National Security Decision  
Directive Number 63

BASIS FOR NEGOTIATION OF NUCLEAR TEST  
VERIFICATION MEASURES (S)

This Decision Directive supplements NSDD-51. It provides additional guidance on the U.S. approach to implementation of effective verification measures in additional protocols to the Threshold Test Ban and Peaceful Nuclear Explosions Treaties. (S)

Since we cannot at present effectively verify that the yields of underground nuclear explosions are consistent with the 150-kiloton limit imposed by the nuclear test limitation treaties, NSDD-51 directed that we should seek Soviet agreement to negotiate improved verification measures. It has been decided that the U.S. negotiating position should be based on the direct measurement of the yield of each nuclear explosion likely to appear by remote observation to exceed the 150-kiloton threshold. This would require that U.S. personnel observe the emplacement of U.S. hydrodynamic instruments within a few meters of the Soviet nuclear device prior to detonation and then measure the hydrodynamic shock wave from the explosion. (S)

Interdepartmental Group Work Program

To prepare a basis for entering negotiations with the USSR, the Interdepartmental Group on Nuclear Testing should complete a study addressing the following topics:

- Criteria for determining those nuclear explosions to which direct yield measurements need be applied (e.g., a 50 or 75 kiloton threshold in planned yield). (S)
- Preparation of a detailed U.S. proposal for verifying observance of the 150 kiloton limit by direct hydrodynamic measurement of test yields. (S)
- Background technical data needed to explain the rationale of each element of the U.S. proposal. (U)
- Estimates of effects on precision from test geometries, geologic properties of the test site, and possible spoofing efforts. (S)
- Operational plans for verifying Soviet yields, to include estimates of costs, personnel, and equipment availability. (S)

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- Operational plans for dealing with Soviet personnel at the Nevada Test Site, including costs and U.S. personnel required. (S)
- Negotiating forum: location, personnel, and appropriate schedule. (U)
- Scenario for initiating negotiations, to include consultation with Congress and with Allies, and methods of approach to the USSR. (U)

This study should be forwarded to the National Security Council by December 10, 1982. (U)

In addition, the Interdepartmental Group should assure that the net assessment of the effects of the Threshold Test Ban Treaty on the United States / Soviet Union nuclear balance, directed by NSDD-51 for delivery to the National Security Council by December 10, 1982, includes an explanation of the rationale for improved test yield verification. (S)

Ronald Reagan