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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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March 24, 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR:

The Vice President
The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense

ALSO: The Director, Arms Control and
Disarmament Agency
The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: SALT Negotiations

Attached is a copy of Presidential Directive/NSC-7, dealing with SALT Negotiations. Distribution of this document is restricted to addressees only.



Zbigniew Brzezinski

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Declassified/Released 6/23/99
Presidential Directive/NSC-7
SALT Negotiations

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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

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March 23, 1977

Presidential Directive/NSC - 7

TO: The Vice President
 The Secretary of State
 The Secretary of Defense

ALSO: The Director, Arms Control and
 Disarmament Agency
 The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
 The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: SALT Negotiations (U)

I have reviewed the options for the U.S. position in the SALT negotiations. My conclusion is that there are two general outcomes that would constitute acceptable SALT TWO agreements: (1) a comprehensive agreement based on reductions to a level of about 2000 and resolution of the Backfire and cruise missile issues, and (2) a Vladivostok-based agreement which defers the cruise missile and Backfire bomber issues to SALT THREE. I authorize the following more detailed positions to be put forward by Secretary Vance in his discussions in Moscow:

1. As its preferred option, the United States should set forth a proposal to achieve a greater measure of strategic stability through reductions in the potential vulnerability of fixed ICBMs on both sides. This would involve reductions to a level of 1800-2000 strategic delivery vehicles to be achieved as soon as possible. This proposal should also include reductions in the MIRV level to 1100-1200, and a reduction in the total of Soviet MLBMs (both SS-9 and SS-18), as amplified later within this Option. On this basis the U.S. also should propose that both sides be prepared to: (1) freeze deployment of existing ICBMs; (2) ban modifications to existing ICBMs and limit the number of annual flight tests of these ICBMs (e.g., 6 per annum for ICBMs and for SLBMs respectively); (3) ban development, testing and deployment of new ICBMs, and (4) ban development, testing and deployment of mobile ICBMs.

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In specific terms, this means I am prepared to: freeze Minuteman III deployment at 550; forego further improvements in all existing US ICBMs; abandon the M-X program for both silo and mobile basing; and forego all other new ICBMs. On the Soviet side I would expect them to freeze the number of SS-17, SS-18, and SS-19 launchers at a number not in excess of 550, with the MLBM component not higher than the total of 150; forego improvements in these missiles; abandon the deployment and further development of the SS-16; and forego all other new ICBMs. Moreover, the Soviet side should be prepared to undertake arrangements which enable the US to differentiate between the SS-20 and the SS-16. Finally, we should propose to ban all transcontinental cruise missiles, nuclear-or conventionally-armed, with ranges over 2500 km. If this general scheme receives a favorable response, the US is willing to consider the Soviet position on the Backfire bomber, provided in no instance is the Backfire deployed as a strategic weapon. It should be noted that, while not part of this package, a civil defense freeze would reinforce the political acceptability of the agreement in the United States.

Moreover, the US side would be prepared to consider favorably, if the Soviet side raises the B-1 and Trident issues, a comprehensive freeze on all strategic systems, including the Backfire, banning their deployment and testing.

2. As an alternative to the foregoing, the United States is prepared to set aside the contentious cruise missile and Backfire bomber issues; if this can be agreed, the United States is prepared to move as quickly as possible to resolve all remaining issues and sign a new treaty. In this context, the U.S. should propose a slight reduction in the Vladivostok levels, from 2400 to 2300, as a token of the intent of both sides to move toward reductions in subsequent agreements. Mobile ICBMs would be permitted under this agreement, and counted against the overall totals.

3. I am also willing to accept a third, but less desirable, outcome based on an aggregate level of 2200-2400 as follows: If the Soviets will agree in a separate document to set a ceiling on the number of Backfire bombers produced through 1985, then I am prepared to set aside the Backfire issue if the Soviets also agree to draw the dividing line between tactical and strategic cruise missiles at about 2500 km. In this case, it would be agreed that all cruise missiles with longer ranges would either be banned, or subject to a temporary ban on deployment and given reconsideration in the next SALT agreement. Mobile ICBMs would be permitted under this agreement, and counted against the overall totals.

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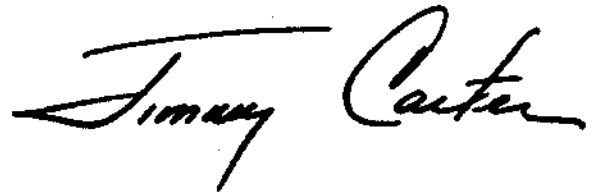
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4. I do not wish that the proposal under paragraph 3 above be given to the Soviet side without an opportunity for further reflection in light of the ongoing discussions in Moscow. In any case, an outcome along these lines may be dependent on whether the Soviet side will lower the 2400 aggregate to 2200-2300 and join in a commitment to negotiate in the direction of the proposal set forth in paragraph 1 above and toward lower reductions in subsequent stages.

5. In all three alternatives it is understood that an agreement will include a satisfactory resolution of the issues of MIRV verification, exchange of a data base and prohibition of deliberate concealment measures, as well as other issues already discussed in Geneva.

6. In general, I consider that the burden for resolving the Backfire is on the Soviet side, and we should press for definite proposals in this respect.

7. We should propose that the Geneva negotiations be resumed at an early date, no later than May 1, and preferably earlier to complete the work already underway.



Attachment

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Supplementary Decisions

In addition to the decisions incorporated into the main Presidential Directive, the following decisions were also taken as a result of the NSC meeting:

1. In a discussion of constraints on the Backfire bomber, Secretary Vance is authorized to bring up restrictions on Arctic basing, refuelling capabilities, and a prohibition against this aircraft being armed with cruise missiles of a range greater than 600 kilometers.

2. The third option should not be advanced during the Moscow discussions without my approval; if negotiations warrant, I will consider a range limit at about 2000 kilometers, but only in connection with tighter limits on the Backfire bomber.

3. In regard to mobile ICBMs, the burden will be on the Soviet side to propose adequate and satisfactory verification procedures to guard against the upgrading of SS-20 IRBMs. The US would, in this case, wish to explore possible forms of on-site inspection.

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