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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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February 1, 1983

NATIONAL SECURITY DECISION
DIRECTIVE NUMBER 78

U.S. APPROACH TO START NEGOTIATIONS - V (U)

This Decision Directive supplements NSDD-33, NSDD-36, NSDD-44 and NSDD-53. It provides additional guidance on the U.S. approach to START and specific guidance concerning the tabling of a Basic Elements paper during the third round of negotiations. (S)

Basic Elements Paper (C)

The U.S. Delegation is authorized to table a Basic Elements paper during the third round of negotiations if and when it considers it tactically advantageous to do so. The specific purpose for tabling such a paper at this time is to establish clearly that the U.S. approach to the START negotiations is comprehensive and, thus, undercut Soviet criticism of the U.S. position implying that it is not. The Basic Elements paper, therefore, should present the full U.S. framework for negotiations. At the same time, the treatment of specific limits presented in the paper should be kept as general as is possible so as to protect U.S. negotiating and programmatic options while still achieving our stated objective in tabling the document. (C)

In finalizing the specific language and content of the document, the delegation has the flexibility, unless otherwise formally instructed, to include either general formulations or formulations of limits with blank spaces included when treating areas about which no U.S. position has as yet been tabled with the Soviet Union. No additional specific numerical limits should be added to the U.S. position as presented to the Soviets by the tabling of this document without specific additional instructions. (C)

The U.S. Phased Approach to START (C)

The tabling of the Basic Elements paper does not alter the basic U.S. phased approach to the START negotiations. (C)

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Discussion of Phase II Issues (C)

The delegation is authorized to discuss, but not to negotiate, Phase II issues subject to the following additional guidance: (C)

(1) Discussion of Phase II items should not be permitted to divert emphasis from, or delay work on, critical Phase I issues. (C)

(2) Until instructed otherwise, in discussion of Phase II issues the treatment of specific limits should be kept as general as possible so as to both protect U.S. options with respect to these issues and maintain the focus on Phase I limits. (C)

(3) The Soviets should not be permitted to isolate discussion on only some Phase II issues (i.e., cruise missile limits) and thus break the linkage that we envision between the negotiation of cruise missile limits and the negotiation of direct limits on throwweight. (S)

- U.S. willingness to engage in continued discussion of Phase II limits on cruise missiles will remain contingent upon continued Soviet willingness to engage in equal and reciprocal discussion of direct limits on ballistic missile throwweight. (C)

- The delegation will ensure that the treatment of these two Phase II issues remains balanced in the context of continued discussion. For example, the general level of specificity used in discussing cruise missile limits will not exceed that used in discussing direct limits on ballistic missile throwweight. (C)

The Definition of a Heavy Bomber (C)

The U.S. will propose the following method for defining a heavy bomber for START: (C)

(1) For existing bombers, a system specific approach to definition should be used. (C)

(2) For future bombers, specific bomber aircraft would be added to the list of heavy bombers if they were capable of performing the mission of a heavy bomber in a manner comparable to those bombers already identified as heavy bombers or if the bomber aircraft meet any of the following specific criteria: (C)

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- maximum gross takeoff weight greater than 100,000 kg; (C)
- maximum unrefueled range of at least 8,000 km (carrying a payload of 6,000 kg, using a full fuel load and a flight profile designed to provide maximum range); or (C)
- empty weight greater than 45,000 kg. (C)

Bomber Limits in Phase II (C)

The internal U.S. goal of a reduction of bomber forces to an equal level of 250 in Phase II established in NSDD-33 is rescinded. There exists a clear relationship between U.S. requirements for heavy bombers and the number of ballistic missile warheads we anticipate to be permitted in the context of a final START agreement. Given our current proposal which would limit ballistic missile weapons to an equal level of 5,000 total warheads for each side: (TS)

- (1) the U.S. will not accept limits which constrain the U.S. to less than 350 heavy bombers; and (TS)
- (2) the U.S. will not propose reductions to equal limits below this level for consideration in either Phase I or Phase II at this time. (TS)

Limits on Air Launched Cruise Missiles (ALCMs) (C)

The U.S. is prepared in Phase II to constrain ALCMs via loading limits to be associated with their carriage on heavy bombers. The internal U.S. position is that it would be willing to accept the following specific limits: (C)

- (1) an average loading of 28 ALCMs per heavy bomber; and (S)
- (2) a maximum of 20 ALCMs on existing bomber types. (S)

Limits on Sea Launched Cruise Missiles (SLCMs) (C)

Additional study is required before a position with respect to limits on SLCM can be determined. Such study will be accomplished on a priority basis. (S)

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Until the necessary study is completed, the U.S. will not raise the issue of limitation of SLCMs. If raised by the Soviets, the U.S. delegation will note that possible limitation of SLCMs must be accompanied by measures to ensure effective verification and that before such limits can be discussed, we must understand how they could be verified. If pressed further, the delegation will state that the problems associated with the verification of possible limits on SLCMs are currently under study in Washington, and that until that study is complete, it has nothing further to say about this issue. (S)

The U.S. position remains that, if limited at all, SLCMs should be limited within the context of START, but the U.S. will not imply any commitment to limit SLCMs in the future at this time. (S)

Limits on Mobile ICBMs (C)

The U.S. will neither propose to ban nor to permit mobile ICBMs at this time. If the issue is raised by the Soviets, the U.S. will maintain its current position that mobile ICBMs, if allowed in START, must be accompanied by measures to ensure effective verification. (C)

Direct Limits on Ballistic Missile Throwweight (C)

The U.S. goal remains direct and equal limits on deployed ballistic missile throwweight below current U.S. levels to be achieved in Phase II. Using the proposed U.S. definition of ballistic missile throwweight and associated counting rules, the numerical goal is an equal limit on deployed ballistic missile throwweight in Phase II at a level below 1.9 mkg. (S)

Throwweight Definition & Counting Rule (C)

The U.S. will propose the following definition and associated counting rule for the treatment of ballistic missile throwweight within START. (C)

(1) For existing types of ballistic missiles, throwweight should be determined on the basis of the maximum demonstrated in any flight test. (C)

(2) For new types of ballistic missiles, the maximum demonstrated throwweight will be compared to the missile's potential throwweight (for a specific reference range). The larger of the two values will be assigned as the throwweight of the particular missile. (C)

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The intent in the treatment of new ballistic missile types is to avoid the possibility of circumvention of a limit on demonstrated throwweight by the practice of testing new missile types with less demonstrated throwweight than they are capable of carrying. (C)

Provisions requiring the additional exchange of specific data should also be applied as necessary to ensure effective verification. (C)

Additional Work (C)

The START Interdepartmental Group shall conduct a detailed review of progress in START to this point and the likely developments over the next year. The Interdepartmental Group should address, as a part of this review, the following two questions which were raised in the context of the Interdepartmental Group papers submitted prior to the January 25 NSC meeting: (C)

- (1) Should the U.S. alter its phased approach to START? (TS)
- (2) Should the U.S. shift to a single aggregate limit including both ballistic missiles and bombers? (TS)

In addition, the Department of Defense, with the assistance of other agencies as appropriate, will conduct, on a priority basis, a detailed study of the military implications and the verification problems associated with limits on Sea Launched Cruise Missiles (SLCMs). The objective of this study is to determine whether more meaningful and effective limits on SLCMs than those previously proposed by the existing Interdepartmental Group papers can be developed and whether any such limits are in the U.S. national interest. An assessment of the net balance between the potential benefits to the U.S. provided by no, or minimal, limits on SLCMs and the existing or potential threat to the U.S. and to U.S. forces posed by similar weapons in Soviet hands must be provided as an integral part of this study. This study should serve as basis for the determination of the U.S. position on the limitation of SLCMs in START. (TS)

The above studies should be completed and provided for review by the National Security Council no later than March 15, 1983. (C)

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