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MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

National Security Planning Group Meeting
March 27, 1984, 2:00-3:00 p.m., Cabinet Room

SUBJECT: Nuclear Arms Control Discussions (S)

PARTICIPANTS:

The President

The Secretary of State
George P. ShultzOSD
Secretary Caspar W. WeinbergerCIA
Director William J. CaseyJCS
General John W. Vessey, Jr.ACDA:
Director Kenneth L. AdelmanChairman, U.S. INF Delegation
Ambassador Paul H. NitzeChairman, U.S. START Delegation
Ambassador Edward RownyWhite House
Robert C. McFarlaneNSC
Ronald F. LehmanMinutes

Mr. McFarlane opened the meeting by focusing the discussion on two questions: (1) what is the Soviet strategy toward arms control, and (2) what does that imply about our behavior for arms control, for dealing with our allies and for handling Congress? The CIA paper indicates that the Soviet Union is following a two pronged strategy aimed at diverting attention away from their walkout of START and INF and yet permitting them to keep the high ground by treating other issues such as ASAT, CDE, "no first use," etc. The Soviet Union has been implementing that strategy through private groups and Congress to get the United States to engage on the Soviet agenda. We also have a positive agenda: CBMs, Hotline, MBFR, CW, and others. (S)

The United States can compile a positive agenda as well. We have the community of advisors looking at CIA study and asking how we should deal with the Soviet Union in arms control. Mr. President, you have received from your advisors and have read a number of papers expressing views as to how best to proceed. Overall, there is much agreement. For example, everyone agrees that we should reject the Soviet agenda and establish our own agenda. However, there is also some disagreement on what should be our positive

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agenda and how we should deal with negative Soviet behavior such as non-compliance and the walk-outs. In short, we do not have complete agreement on how we validate the record of three years of effort. Today, we will hear from the President's key advisors.

(S)

Secretary Weinberger indicated that his paper begins by asking the question, "What is the interest of the Soviet Union in reaching an agreement this year?" and it concludes with the answer that there is very little evidence that they are interested in an agreement. We need to focus on the content of an agreement, not on agreement for agreement's sake. The Soviet Union has little interest in giving the President a victory. They would only give him an agreement for which he could not take credit. What are they interested in then? A SALT II agreement that did not provide for reductions. To get an agreement, they will require us to make major concessions. Those who talk of a new framework are really talking about going back to SALT II 1/2. The Soviet Union has walked out of three talks. We should make our case based on the merits. The zero option was very popular and the only reason it was rejected was because the Soviet Union wanted a monopoly. They walked out because we would not agree to their having a monopoly. We want more than a piece of paper; we want real reductions. They are violating SALT II; SALT II means we won't worry about throw-weight. We should be vigorously defending our proposals and pressing the Soviet Union to return to the table. That doesn't mean that there are not things we can negotiate now. We should press to renegotiate the TTBT. We can negotiate a full ban on chemical weapons with full verification. We can negotiate notification of ballistic missile tests and Hotline improvements. If we become too eager, the Soviet Union will sense weakness. And even if we get them back to the negotiations, they can set you up for a later walkout when it will hurt most. The reality is that no one across the table is in charge--they have a collegial organization. Chernenko is not only not responding, he wouldn't even receive the letter that Scowcroft carried. We should emphasize our proposals, we should make clear that we are ready, and we should speak out on the compliance issue. (S)

Secretary Shultz responded with ten do's and don'ts, really, six don'ts and four do's. (1) Don't base policy on speculations about the Soviet Union. (2) Don't negotiate with ourselves or Congress. (3) Don't make concessions for the purpose of getting Soviets back to the table, but we can reorganize our positions to make them more presentable. (4) Don't get into the position where you need an agreement. (5) It is a mistake to change our positive posture on arms control into a negative one because this risks loss of publics, the Congress, and our allies. (6) Don't rest on past work; let's keep working to be prepared. The process is veto prone and therefore we can't let fear of leaks delay the effort. (7) We must continue to set positive messages that we are prepared to deal across the board--look at START and INF for better ways to

present our position. (8) We should be prepared to take parts of the Soviet position and shouldn't be against everything in SALT. The Secretary of Defense uses the word "framework" as if it were a swear word. We need to move on MBFR and we need to go further, depending on the Soviet response. We should move quickly on the CW Treaty and the Hotline. We should move on CDE and we could move on TTBT if we could manage a decision to take it on forthrightly. (9) We should look at the fundamental differences between us and the Soviets in START. You can debate over whether START or INF is more important, but I don't see how you can move on START without considering INF. (10) We should look to see what is important for us, and with all due respect to the CIA analysis, they could be wrong. (S)

Director Adelman said that he agreed with much of what had been said. Adelman reminded the President that he worked with the campaign during the hostage crisis and negotiations with Iran and he saw the dangers of setting oneself up for an agreement--the risks are great. To answer the mail, we must show that we have sound policies and are serious about arms control. We need to identify areas where movement is possible. In INF, Adelman and Nitze have identified a proposal that would have the Soviets reduce to a level which we would stop at. We could negotiate such a step or it could be a declaratory policy. We could attempt to reach a US-Soviet understanding on non-proliferation. We could develop rules of the road or proper behavior through space-CBMs in the CD. We should work with our allies to set the stage for a policy of no early use of nuclear weapons--we can look at different ways to package this and move slowly and cautiously. (S)

General Vessey put forth a military view. We must maintain the momentum of our defense build-up at the highest levels possible. We must protect the President's strategic modernization program. We must keep the Alliance together, and we must cap or reverse the Soviet military build-up--Soviets can't or won't negotiate until after elections. The Scowcroft coalition and support on the Hill need tending. Allies are not carrying the load. (S)

Director Casey agreed that we must make judgments about the Soviets but argued that we have a fair amount of history. We can assume that Moscow is not anxious to help the President, but they don't want to appear intransigent. They believe that treaties in START and INF are out of reach. Clearly, the prospects for getting an agreement are remote. We should continue to assess our own interest. We can accomplish something on second order issues. At CDE, we can trade Western confidence building measures for a non-aggression pact. (S)

Ambassador Rowny recognized that there was not a consensus on how to get the Soviet Union back to the table, but believed that they might even return on their own. The Soviet Union didn't really

explore what was in the trade-offs for them. They may come back when they see that there is really something in it for them. If we show a little ankle, maybe a little thigh, then you can get movement. There is no chance for a full START agreement this year, and speculation on an Interim Agreement is dangerous. Vladivostok is a better precedent, and aide memoir is safest. The Soviet Union never closed the door on START; they still want to limit D-5 and ALCM. (S)

Ambassador Nitze agreed that we should seek US objectives, but we are already clear on that. The issue is tactical. It is not impossible to get an agreement, but 90% chance you won't. It is wholly unlikely that Moscow will negotiate seriously in an election year. What does one do? One does the CW treaty--that is a perfectly solid thing to do. There is no chance the Soviets will agree to that. But it is dangerous to be solidly engaged in START or INF in an election year. (S)

Secretary Weinberger commented further that he didn't disagree with Secretary Shultz's ten points, only with the interpretation of them. At this time, we will have to pay a very high price to get an agreement. We have all agreed that we shouldn't make any concessions to get them back to the table. All agreed that we don't want to get into a position where we must have an agreement. We can keep up our work, but we don't want to further weaken our proposals. We can keep sending messages that we are ready to negotiate, but that is hard to do in an empty room. I agree that we should do what we can do in lesser areas, but I'm very worried about space arms control. Also, talk of a START "framework" is a codeword--I'm opposed. (S)

The President suggested that we are all not as far apart as it might seem. There is no question that the Soviet Union is trying to make us look non-cooperative. I believe the Soviets want to avoid the onus for having walked out of Geneva. In my answer to the letter from Chernenko, we should recognize that we have opposite views on who is threatened. We should cite their quotations that are threatening to us; we should cite their build-up. Then we could cite the fact that in the 1940's, we proposed to do away with all these systems and they said no. Nineteen times since then, we have tried to reach agreements, for example, Eisenhower's open sky proposal. We can't go on negotiating with ourselves. We can't be supplicants crawling, we can't look like failures. I've read the papers and made some notes. Let me share them with you. They want to avoid the onus of walking out, therefore, it is unlikely that they will give us anything in START and INF right now. We want an agreement, but we want a good agreement. I do not intend to make unilateral concessions to get them back to the table, but I believe we must have a full credible agenda on arms control. Maybe we could build a record. Mitterrand believed that they would give us the cold shoulder for

several months, therefore, we will need to do lesser things, MBFR, chemical weapons, confidence building, notification of all ballistic missile tests, agreement not to encrypt, and CDE. But we shouldn't let them off the hook on START and INF; we must keep the pressure on. To do this, we need solid, flexible positions on both START and INF. (S)

The President continued, I don't want to fall into the trap of SALT II, but if there are some things that are good, then we shouldn't ignore them simply because they are a part of SALT II. For example, having a launcher limit isn't wrong, so long as it is matched by warhead and throw-weight limits. In short, we need a position which takes part of their approach and melds it with ours so that they have a fig leaf for coming off their position. I think my letter to Chernenko should be substantive and positive along these lines, and stressing that they have an obligation to resume START and INF talks. Perhaps we should offer to have Ed Rowny and Paul Nitze engage in private talks with the Russians. I would like to table the chemical treaty before we set off for China. I think the Senior Arms Control Policy Group should accelerate their work and present me with options for new START/INF positions within a few weeks. This is for us, not for the public. Maybe we should consider a speech in a few months to bring out our record. George (Shultz), I want you to be our public spokesman on arms control. Leaks and gratuitous backgrounders have got to stop. I understand we have procedures for dealing with clearing testimony. I think we should work in private channels, but we will not crawl, we will build a record. (S)

Mr. McFarlane noted that we have our instructions and now we have to get down to work. (S)

The President asked if anyone had any disagreements. (S)

Secretary Weinberger expressed concern that the President's guidance not be misunderstood. In a few days, the New York Times may be reporting that the President has ordered new proposals on START and INF. Aren't we talking about what we didn't say, but could say, about our proposals? (S)

Ambassador Rowny noted that the Soviet Union has not listened to all that we had to say in Geneva. (S)

Ambassador Nitze volunteered that what we were really talking about was fleshing out our positions. (S)

The President said that Director Adelman had a good idea on INF about their reducing to a level which we would reach at the end of 1985. Something like that might be an option worth looking at. (S)

Secretary Weinberger said that some of our allies might use this as an excuse not to do what must be done on deployments. (S)

Director Adelman agreed with Secretary Weinberger. (S)

Secretary Weinberger said that we should agree that we will fill out our position. (S)

The President noted that his letter to Chernenko offers an opportunity to get their attention. Have we given enough attention to the fact that they have a climate of insecurity? (S)

Mr. McFarlane noted that we will press on with the guidance, noting that we will make no pre-emptive concessions, flesh out our positions and be ready if they return, and prepare to table a chemical weapons treaty before the China trip. (S)

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