

~~SECRET~~

5

SYSTEM II
90227
Add-on

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

UNCLASSIFIED WITH
~~SECRET~~ ATTACHMENT

NOTED

Nm 3-22

March 27, 1986

INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM FOR JOHN M. POINDEXTER

FROM: *Bill*
BILL WRIGHT

SUBJECT: Minutes of the March 25 NSPG Meeting

Attached are the minutes of the National Security Planning Group meeting which was held Tuesday, March 25, 1986 on Responding to Soviet Violations Policy (RSVP).

Bob

SK

Concurrence: Bob Linhard and Sven Kraemer

DECLASSIFIED
White House Guidelines, August 28, 1997, 7
By *rsh* NARA, Date *3/2/05*

UNCLASSIFIED UPON REMOVAL
OF ~~SECRET~~ ATTACHMENT

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

SYSTEM II
90227

54

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

SUBJECT: Minutes of the National Security Planning Group
Meeting on RSVP Options (S)

PARTICIPANTS: See Tab A (S)

DATE, TIME March 25, 1986
AND PLACE: 11:00-12:00, Situation Room

The meeting began at 11:10 a.m. with Admiral Poindexter providing a contextual introduction to the evolving U.S. interim restraint policy along the following lines: (S)

-- Mr. President, we are meeting today to review the policy of US interim restraint in the face of the continued pattern of Soviet noncompliance with arms control agreements. We need to consider what appropriate and proportionate responses the United States would be prepared to undertake in response to these Soviet violations. (S)

-- Today's meeting will focus discussion on possible military program options, but setting aside for now decisions on such options. We will be having a second meeting on this issue in mid-April to step up to the decisions required at that time. (S)

-- As you know, the specific event requiring your early decision is the fact that our 8th Trident submarine begins its sea trials on May 20. Unless we dismantle other US strategic systems such as Poseidon submarines, this new Trident will exceed numerical limits under SALT I (SLBM ceiling) and under SALT II (MIRVed ballistic missile and MIRVed SNDV ceilings). (S)

-- Mr. President, before we begin a review of the specific programmatic options before us today, I believe it important to briefly summarize the policy on the issue of US interim restraint that you have set forth during your Administration -- most comprehensively in your report to the Congress on June 10 of last year. (S)

-- In May, 1982, on the eve of the START negotiations, you decided that the US would not undercut the expired SALT I agreement or the unratified SALT II agreement as long as the Soviet Union exercised equal restraint. You stated that in spite of serious reservations about the inequities of the SALT I agreement and the serious flaws of the SALT II agreement, you were taking this action to foster an atmosphere of mutual restraint on strategic forces as we entered serious new negotiations. (S)

~~SECRET~~
Declassify on: OADR

DECLASSIFIED

NLS M05-016 #19270

~~SECRET~~ BY WIT, NARA, DATE 12/21/05

~~SECRET~~

51

~~SECRET~~

2

-- You indicated that this policy was an interim policy to help provide a framework of mutual restraint as we pursued effective arms reductions agreements. You made clear that it required Soviet reciprocity, and that it must not adversely affect our national security interests in the face of the continuing Soviet military build up. (S)

-- Unfortunately, our hopes and assumptions of 1982 concerning Soviet behavior did not withstand the test of time. The US scrupulously refrained from any actions which would undercut existing agreements; we kept our part of the bargain. But, as you have detailed in three reports to the Congress on Soviet noncompliance (most recently last December 23), the Soviets have repeatedly violated important provisions of these agreements in spite of our requests for corrective action. At the same time, they have maintained their massive military buildup and, notwithstanding the summit agreement to seek common ground, they have failed to make substantial progress in the Geneva negotiations. (S)

-- In your report to the Congress on Interim Restraint last June 10 you stated that you were prepared to go the extra mile in terms of interim restraint, by deactivating an additional Poseidon submarine later in the year, but that you would not accept a double standard of compliance and would not accept an adverse impact of Soviet violations on our national security. (S)

-- In your June report, you informed the Congress, as well as the Soviet Union, that the United States would take proportionate and appropriate responses to Soviet violations and that you would consider future deployment milestones of US strategic systems on a case-by-case basis in light of the overall situation and Soviet actions regarding: 1) correction of their noncompliance, 2) a reversal of their unparalleled and unwarranted arms build up and 3) their active pursuit of arms reduction agreements in the Geneva negotiations. (S)

-- To help determine such proportionate and appropriate US responses, you asked Secretary Weinberger to provide his recommendations to you. The recommendations of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Chiefs, the Secretary of State and the Directors of ACDA and the CIA are before us today. They include specific military responses as well as considerations of a more general nature. (S)

-- We intend to focus today on the specific, programmatic military options, rather than on broader issues. We need to understand what specific actions we are capable of taking before fashioning our overall declaratory policy context. (S)

-- We will proceed in order with the eight programmatic options as shown on the boards of matrices at your right and left, Mr. President. (S)

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

At this point in the meeting Admiral Poindexter briefly covered the eight options along the following lines while referring to the matrices (Tab B): ~~(S)~~

-- Secretary Weinberger has the first four original options that were reported to you last December. Each of these were conceived under the assumption of an FY 86 arms control supplemental and in a pre-Gramm-Rudman-Hollings environment. Some of the funding for those options is now contained in the FY 87 budget submission as indicated on the funding matrix. ~~(S)~~

Secretary Weinberger entered a clarification that the money was in the budget but it would have to be better defined. ~~(S)~~

-- Under Option A OSD would preserve the two Poseidon SSBNs that would have to be cut up when the eighth Trident -- the Nevada -- goes on sea trials in May, 1986, if we were to continue to comply with SALT. ~~(S)~~

o Within a year we could decide what, if anything, is to be done with the submarines. We could overhaul them, convert them or simply leave them as is. The funding line in the matrix covers the overhaul of five Poseidons to return them to service as C-3 missile SSBNs; it was included in the 86 and 87 budget submission. ~~(S)~~

o Under this approach we would violate both SALT I and SALT II limits in May, 1986, by not commencing required dismantlement activity. ~~(S)~~

-- Under Option B 50 Minuteman III missiles that are now kept in storage would replace 50 of the older, non-MIRVed Minuteman IIs and we would add 150 (MK-12) warheads to our forces -- a net increase of 100 warheads. ~~(S)~~

o This option is reasonably cheap and could be achieved within a relatively short time; it seems to have some military utility. ~~(S)~~

o It would violate the SALT II MIRV limits. ~~(S)~~

-- Option C involves encryption on future ballistic missile flight testing. I understand this capability is already planned for the Small ICBM, so there is no additional cost on that system. The D-5 would incur additional cost and a possible IOC slip. ~~(S)~~

o At the SACG on this subject last Friday no agency favored encryption of the D-5. Further, a consensus emerged on dropping this option as an RSVP response, but keeping our options open to deny information, including encryption, on future ICBM tests. ~~(S)~~

~~SECRET~~

51

~~SECRET~~

4

-- The last of the original DOD options is the one involving an intensified CBW research and development program, Option C. This type of activity is currently underfunded and represents a real area for technological surprise. (S)

o The funding seems reasonable, but the SACG members had trouble relating this response to the overall thrust of Soviet noncompliance. As a consequence, we feel that this program should compete in a normal manner for funds in the DOD budget and not be an element of a response to violations. (S)

-- Option E was not so much a matter of accelerating the Small ICBM milestones as it was one of ensuring that they are met in a timely manner. State originally felt that the Administration's support for Midgetman was beginning to wane on the Hill. (S)

o At the SACG last Friday we concluded that the Small ICBM -- Midgetman -- was moving about as fast as programmatically possible. We have some big decisions regarding its size and basing mode that are coming up next winter and that forcing the system into the limelight might derail the orderly selection process. (S)

o The Midgetman was part of your June interim restraint policy in that it was cited as the US response to the SS-25 violation. We reached consensus at the SACG to include a reference to the Small missile in the declaratory policy that would go along with our RSVP decisions. That reference should not prejudice the MIRV status or basing mode outcome. (S)

-- Option F is a State sponsored response which pushes for earlier IOCs on PENAIDs and MARVs as a treaty compliant answer to Soviet ABM Treaty violations. There are several ways we can go in this area, and most are very threat specific. (S)

o We have highlighted two possible excursions -- RADAR only and MARV -- to illustrate the IOC and funding tradeoffs. (S)

o These options simply accelerate ongoing programs that are paced to the evolving Soviet ABM threat. (S)

-- Option G was a late entry supported by both State and ACDA in which we would backfit the first half of the SSN-688 class of attack submarines with Vertical Launch Systems for SLCM. There are some costs here, but we would not have to commit to the full 31 boat line. (S)

o The conversion could be accomplished during the regular overhaul cycle at about \$92M per unit. This option would be compliant with all US treaty obligations. (S)

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

SECRET

60

~~SECRET~~

5

-- The last military response option, Option H, originally involved turning the 69 B-52Gs, that are planned conventional assets, into ACM carriers in the near term. There was strong resistance to putting these assets into a SIOP-role due to unplanned tanker shortfalls. (S)

o We discussed this fully at the SACG and changed the option to simply accelerate the ACM program. Mr. President, as you know the ACM is the new stealth model that will be a big improvement over the present ALCM it will eventually replace. (S)

o Our funding estimate on this option is rough since it relies heavily on how quickly the ACMs replace the ALCMs and what platform they are retrofitted on. (S)

-- Mr. President, I know you agree that this has been most helpful. We more fully understand the programmatic options. The matrix on funding (and the eventual method we choose to get those funds) is very important and should be carefully refined as we move toward an April programmatic decision. (S)

-- Besides the funding issue, this decision will turn on both the military significance of the Soviet violations and the appropriateness of our chosen response. (S)

-- Mr. President, I will now turn over the discussion of the options to your Cabinet members. Secretary Weinberger, would you care to lead off? (S)

Secretary Weinberger stressed that our declaration about SALT II would be important. We need to state firmly that the U.S. will not continue to comply and what we do thereafter will be done in the most militarily efficient manner possible. As OSD looked at the programmatic actions we used four criteria to narrow the field. The first was the military significance of the options. Second, they were interested in its affordability. Third, it should be distinguishable from our current programs and, finally, it should be reversible in case the Soviets return to compliance. With those criterion in mind, he chose to preserve two Poseidons from dismantlement as a visible demonstration that we are no longer bound by SALT. The Minuteman switch to 50 more MIRV systems was chosen because of the low cost and the relatively quick achievement of military capability. Option C, encryption, is now being undertaken with the Small ICBM and the CBW option he agreed could be included in the regular program. He stressed that according to the most recent draft of Soviet Military Power, chemical weapons in the Soviet Union were on the rise. He mentioned the recent explosion of an SS-18 follow on missile as evidence that the Soviet violation pattern continues. (S)

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

601

~~SECRET~~

Admiral Crowe spoke next and essentially agreed with the SECDEF on the choice of options. The four OSD options have more merit than any others. He stated that the JCS has consistently argued that the most important response is full funding of the strategic modernization program since it is designed to deal with Soviet cheating. If we go with the first four options, these must be funded on top of the full strategic modernization program. Gramm-Rudman-Hollings will make this all the more difficult. The JCS are sensitive to funding for older systems and don't believe that we should spend money unnecessarily. But at the bottom line, the JCS view this decision as a political judgement call. (S)

Under Secretary Whitehead, substituting for the Secretary of State, disagreed with the choice of options A and B. He stated that the Department opposes a U.S. violation of SALT numerical limits. If we are to do so we would start a process of escalation in responses. State is not unmindful of Soviet violations, however, believe we must look at costs and benefits of options. There is no benefit in returning two old SSBNs to sea and if we would simply add 100 warheads to the current inventory of 7,000 that would not be a large increase. In contrast, there are costs; the Geneva NST attempt to reduce nuclear arsenals would be seen as inconsistent, Congressional reaction on the Defense budget would present severe problems and these options would further handicap us on the Hill. Our Allies would be distressed with violations of numerical limits and finally, the public will question our rights to these measures. For all these reasons, the cost outweigh the benefits in violation of numerical limits. State is not soft on violations but we need proportionality and they therefore favor options C, D, E, F and G. As a last thought, Whitehead stressed the need to consult with Allies and mentioned communications this week from Thatcher and Carrington, to that end. (S)

Director Casey stressed the need to communicate clearly to both the Soviets and our own people that we are concerned with the violations by undertaking those action which are feasible. We should stress that the U.S. is free to take any steps necessary; Defense should develop contingency plans that go beyond these options. It is most important that we remain resolute in our backing of the strategic modernization program and SDI. With regard to the specific programmatic options Casey was agnostic, but felt our excersizing the encryption option would lose a moral initiative and be counterproductive since we seek to reverse the Soviet compacity to encrypt. (S)

Director Adleman noted that the U.S. can take a measure of pride in that we have called out Soviet violations and these are now widely accepted -- the question is what we should do about it. Worst of all worlds would be, after highlighting issues, not to

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

62

~~SECRET~~

do anything. It's a matter of our word. We will lose credibility if we continue to live under an equal restraint regime including the fatally flawed SALT II Treaty. The longer this Administration abides by that treaty the more it becomes the Reagan treaty and less the Carter treaty. Returning to the question of what to do, Director Adelman indicated that we should proclaim that we are no longer bound by SALT and then substitute some form of equal restraint framework. We can look at military options later in an orderly fashion but we should not exclude breaching numerical limits since the Soviets have been in violation of this provision for the past five years. In fact, today they are over the limit by about two Poseidons worth of SNDVs. (S)

Ambassador Rowny said he agreed and that if we decide to continue with SALT the Soviets would "laugh all the way to the bank." We need to change now to something that gets their attention. He put in a special plug for option H stating the Soviets are particularly concerned with ACMS and the sooner we get them the greater the signal we will be sending. (S)

SECDEF disagreed with Adelman in that he felt it was not desirable to have an interim restraint framework. He disagreed with the State options as being too expensive and fully compliant. However, he agreed with the need for consulting, but stated the Allies should not tell us what to do. (S)

The President observed that we may be shooting ourselves in the foot by keeping two old Poseidons which do not represent a productive military solution. He was concerned also that we are in the midst of a public debate on reducing arsenals and our options should be consistent with that theme and not sound extravagant. He indicated that our policy should be one in which we reduce in one area if they reduce in another. The problem here is that the Soviets do not destroy their weapons. (S)

SECDEF - Options allows us to keep and use things we already have. They do provide some military advantage. Our strategic modernization program helps us keep up. We should simply state we no longer adhere -- and take whatever steps necessary. (S)

Secretary Baker observed that most of the options were merely symbolic. Our new policy needs to focus on what you, Mr. President, want to obtain from the Summit. But what is the magic of doing it now? Why symbolism now? (S)

Admiral Poindexter answered -- because the next Trident goes to sea in May. (S)

The President then stated that he still had a problem with the Poseidons (why use something on its last legs?) but that he would

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

v3

~~SECRET~~

8

prefer option B since the missiles are in storage and they can be used to help even up the balance. The public could understand that we don't need to keep good missiles in storage. (S)

Admiral Crowe observed that option B provided you the greatest military return on your investment. (S)

The President asked if we were to take all of the options and tie them together, then would we still stay even with the Soviets? He felt it was hypocritical to stay with a treaty they are violating, and asked if we can give them a choice to join us now to reach mutual equality before assuming a no restraint policy. (S)

SECDEF answered that the Geneva program was doing just this. What you need to decide is what is to be done when the eighth Trident goes to sea. He still felt the declaration was most important, and that we could couple that to urge them to join us in Geneva. (S)

The President then suggested that we replace the interim restraint framework with our new START position and failing that the U.S. would undertake further programmatic options. (S)

Whitehead stated that it was not true the Soviets had violated all provisions; they had shown restraint to their numerical levels. If we breach the limits it will give them an open excuse to observe no limits. He felt that, feeble as they were, the limits were useful. (S)

The President felt that the Soviets have more to gain by exercising restraint now from an economic standpoint. He had learned this during the "fireside chat" in Geneva. If we use the thrust that the agreement on the table is what we want to replace interim restraint, we won't be permitting a dangerous superiority to develop. We are just playing catch up. (S)

Director Adelman observed that Soviets may not have violated all provisions of SALT but it's like the tax code -- no provision should be violated. He continued by noting that since SALT II was signed the Soviets have fielded 4,500 warheads, double their bomber weapons and deployed two new SSBNs and three new ICBMs. He continued to stress the need for a sub ceiling on warheads. He continued to differ with SECDEF, stressing the need to replace the restraint of SALT with our START proposals -- we must be seen as not just shredding treaties but simply not being bound by SALT II, if violated. (S)

SECDEF said he didn't have any problems being limited to no more than they have in warheads and throwweight -- our formulation must be positive -- we will be free to buildup. (S)

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

64

~~SECRET~~

9

Secretary Baker agreed with this approach but stressed that we don't need to couple it with new funds. (S)

The President asked what we are doing now in strategic modernization and SECDEF answered that we have submitted funding for MX and Midgetman. The President went on to observe that anything that we do will have funding problems. Also we will need to explain that new systems are replacements and do not represent an increase in the numbers of weapons. (S)

Adelman felt that a good solid set of military options would be the key -- we can go to the American people with our plan. (S)

Admiral Crowe said that the immediate problem is the two SSBNs -- we don't have to destroy -- just tie them up, their tubes may have some utility as SDI platforms as the technology matures.

The President observed that it makes more sense to tie up rather than cut up these old boats. (S)

SECDEF suggested the subs could be used for mobilization. (S)

At 12:01 Admiral Poindexter closed the meeting, reminding the members that we will return to the subject for a decision in mid-April. (S)

Attachments

Tab A	List of Participants
Tab B	Matrices of Options

Prepared by: *Bill* Bill Wright

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

es

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

- President Reagan
- Vice President Bush
- Under Secretary of State Whitehead
- Secretary Baker
- Secretary Weinberger
- Director Casey
- Mr. Regan
- Admiral Poindexter
- Admiral Crowe
- Director Adelman
- Ambassador Rowny
- Director Miller
- Craig Fuller
- Ron Lehman
- Sven Kraemer
- Bill Wright
- Bob Linhard

DECLASSIFIED
White House Guidelines, August 29, 1997
By CS NARA, Date 3/22/02

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
Declassify on: OADR

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~