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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING

DATE, TIME AND PLACE: Wednesday, April 21, 1982
The Cabinet Room -- 10:30-11:40 A.M.

SUBJECT: Strategic Arms Reductions Talks (START)

PARTICIPANTS:

The President
The Vice President

State
Secretary Alexander M. Haig, Jr.
Mr. Richard Burt, Director, Politico/
Military Affairs

OSD
Secretary Caspar W. Weinberger
Under Secretary Fred C. Ikle

OMB
Associate Director William Schneider

CIA
Director William J. Casey

USUN
Ambassador Kenneth Adelman

JCS
General David C. Jones

ACDA
Director Eugene V. Rostow
Ambassador Edward L. Rowny

White House
Mr. Edwin Meese, III
Mr. James A. Baker, III
Mr. Michael K. Deaver
Judge William P. Clark
Mr. Robert C. McFarlane
Admiral John M. Poindexter
Mr. Richard G. Darman

The Vice President's Office
Admiral Daniel J. Murphy

NSC
Colonel Michael O. Wheeler
Mr. Sven Kraemer
Lt Col Robert Linhard

Minutes

Judge Clark: Mr. President, today we will beginning final preparations in the NSC process to develop the U.S. negotiating position for START. There are divergent views on many of the complex issues involved. That is healthy. We will begin today with a presentation by Richard Burt (Department of State) on the START interagency process thus far.

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Review April 21, 2002

Classified and Extended by William P. Clark

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Mr. Burt: Mr. President, the START IG has been at work for over a year. I am here as Chairman of the IG, not representing the special interest of State. With the help of these charts, I will be reviewing the framework for the U.S. negotiating approach.

Our central purpose today is to begin discussion on the framework of an opening START position. Our central question is what element of strategic nuclear forces we want to reduce. A corollary question is to what levels we want to reduce. The basic objectives of a U.S. position, we believe, should be those of: (1) military sufficiency (NSDD-13); (2) strategic stability; (3) significant reductions (military useful and politically necessary); (4) politically plausible; and (5) verifiable.

The question of what should be reduced is the question of "units account." Different options and combinations of options have been examined in the START IG. The units include: (1) ballistic missile warheads; (2) launchers; (3) missile throw-weight; (4) warhead weight; (5) bombers; and (6) bomber armament.

Criteria for selecting units of account include: (1) easily understood (to gain wide support); (2) deal with important asymmetries (especially heavy missiles); (3) tough but plausible; (4) protect Allied interest; (5) generally consistent with INF; and (6) flexible and durable framework for negotiations.

The strategic balance in 1982, as the chart shows, is roughly as follows. In deployed missile warheads, the USSR is slightly ahead (7500 to 7100). In SALT-accountable missile warheads (including Poseidon), the U.S. is slightly ahead (9500 to 8800). In strategic nuclear delivery vehicles, the Soviets have a substantial lead (2763 to 1944). In missile throw-weight, the Soviets have a very substantial lead (5.1 to 1.9 kilogram). In bombers, including Backfire, the Soviets lead 415 to 347; however, the U.S. leads in numbers of bomber weapons.

In terms of agency approaches to the units of account issue, all agencies favor radical cuts in the number of warheads to levels of 4,000 or 5,000. On launchers, State favors a limit of 1,500; other agencies do not favor launcher limits. On throw weight, State favors reductions in heavy missiles and ICBM warheads; ACDA favors a warhead weight limit; and OSD favors reductions to U.S. level. On bombers, all favor levels of about 250. The Chief Negotiator, Ambassador Rowley, has his own proposal and will make some comments later. We understand that JCS will also be expressing their own views.

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In terms of our analysis, we have sought to evaluate the different units of account and their possible combination in terms of the criteria we identified above. As a focus for our discussion, we have proposed seven questions as follows: (1) How does our choice of units of account help us to achieve significant reductions and also protect our military requirements? (2) How does our choice of units of account build or undercut support for the President's strategic modernization program and for the defense program as a whole? What is the political environment surrounding START? (3) How does the choice of units of account build or undercut support of the U.S. position: with the the public, in Congress, and with our Allies? (4) Is continuity with SALT I and SALT II good or bad? (5) How does verification bear on the choice of the U.S. negotiating proposal? (6) Are some proposals more resilient than others? What is the relationship between our negotiating position and the likely course of the negotiations? (7) Do we require equality in every important measure of strategic capability? What are the requirements of Public Law 92-448 (the "Jackson Amendment" to SALT I).

Judge Clark: General Jones, would you care to say a few words on the JCS views?

General Jones: We have a problem with our ability, should we achieve "significant" reductions, to certify military sufficiency of our remaining assets in terms of the policy guidance we have received, as in NSDD-13. Our guidance has given us very severe requirements on destroying the Soviet target structure. We would require 13,000-15,000 strategic weapons vice the 9,000 we have today to carry out this guidance, and these weapons would need to be of much better quality. We actually need increased and better weapons.

Mr. Meese. What policy guidance do you mean?

General Jones: NSDD-13 and the SIOP, etc. [REDACTED]

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-- The third chart shows that if the different agencies' START proposals are fully implemented, the U.S. warhead numbers and requirements do not drop, but actually rise, as will be the case when we deploy B-1 and Trident.

This leaves us with two dilemmas. In terms of the guidance we have, the agencies' proposals focus on missile warhead reductions, while we will actually need to grow in number of bomber- and submarine-force weapons. But in that case, we may be perceived as not seeking significant reductions. We in the JCS do not have the answer to these dilemmas, but we certainly feel that the issues are considerably more complex than the chart presented by the State briefer.

Secretary Weinberger: General Jones' statement is very important.

Mr. President, we need a proposal to be complete and ready before the European Summit. We need something like a Memorial Day T.V. address, which will drive the process, will dominate the Summit, and will demonstrate to all the Administration's seriousness about arms control. As for the criteria of being politically plausible, we should not hesitate to ask the Soviets to reduce more than we do, since to do otherwise, would be to freeze their superiority. You made the same point prior to your November 18 speech, when some told us that the public here and in Europe would not buy it. But the Soviets have not refused to negotiate, and your proposal still enjoys high public support in Europe and here.

General Jones pointed out some problems with reductions. Let me make some points. Our approach should not build on SALT; launchers will not be the basic units of account. The SALT launcher emphasis permitted an enormous Soviet buildup. Warheads are not the proper measure, since they do not account for the effectiveness of deterrence or include categories like accuracy, yield, or hard-target capability. We believe throw weight is the overall measure of effectiveness, and that we need to reduce it to achieve real reductions. As for NSDD-13, I believe it does not really apply if we realize Soviet restraints under a new agreement. I believe it applies if there are no Soviet restraints. One other point is that your proposal will probably demand on-site verification, and this will put the Soviets on the defensive, since the public generally supports the idea.

Dr. Rostow: I want to back up Cap (Weinberger) about the issue of being fair to the Soviets. We should not negotiate for them; they do a good job for themselves. The ACDA approach is best for

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the U.S.; it is serious and plausible. I am helping prepare Soviet and U.S. public opinion for the June speeches, and I am getting a good response. Our approach is plausible and is based on INF experience. Then we asked for asymmetrical reductions, explained our rationale, and had our positions accepted by U.S. and European opinion. Our rationale is that we must have deterrence, and that we must limit, or eliminate, the first-strike systems. Our mistake in the 70's was to think that the Soviets, like we, did not want first-strike capability. Now we must insist on equal deterrence to the bulk of their threat. At present, the Soviets can knock out our ICBMs with one-fifth of their forces. Our proposal would take away two-thirds of their first-strike capability. A first-strike would no longer be plausible, and we would greatly reduce the nightmare paralyzing our people.

The anti-nuclear movement is important. But, perhaps, more troubling is what I sense to be a return to isolationism. There are more people now, who in the face of the Soviets' buildup, want to pull U.S. troops out of Europe and to fold the U.S. inward. Note Congressman Rhodes' recent speech and the McNamara/Bundy article. Also, Henry Kissinger said in Brussels that great powers don't commit suicide for other nations. We have real problems; I think we really need to restore our credibility.

The ACDA proposal involves a simple formula. It involves a limit on the number of warheads that can kill, and it limits the measure of destructive power for the most rapid and most accurate weapons. Our proposal meets all of the criteria. ACDA right now is focusing on limiting the weight of the warheads, but we are not hard on this way of limiting warheads.

There is a mistake in Rick Burt's chart. ACDA does favor an explicit limit on the number of ICBM warheads, even though this would be asymmetrical reductions. We reject State's position of limiting the number of deployed launchers. State's position has overtones of SALT, which would be damaging, and which could also interfere with future U.S. force developments. [REDACTED]

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Dr. Ikle: But the reduced Soviet numbers in a START environment would in the longer term not include the large Soviet first-strike forces. Therefore, U.S. requirements would be different. Wouldn't they?

Dr. Rostow: Let me get back to the deployed launcher issue. Such a limit would in time block potential U.S. multiple aim-point systems, which could become much more feasible with a smaller missile force. It could also require a change of definition from SALT II in terms of U.S. M-X deployments. Also, we may want to move to more smaller weapons to provide for deterrence, especially if we eliminate MIRVs and eliminate first-strike systems. In sum, we feel the U.S. approach should include limitations on the number of warheads, especially ICBM warheads, and limitations on the measure of destructive power, such as throw weight.

Mr. Casey: I will limit my comments to the U.S. ability to monitor the specific units of account. Details are provided in the paper we have submitted. I believe the units of account should be decided on the basis of security requirements. The specific units of accounts have not been worked out yet. Once we have decided what they are, we will need to see how these affect Soviet capabilities and how these need to be limited. One needs to look at problems of refires, telemetry, concealment, etc.

Dr. Schneider: I am concerned about the emphasis in these options on warhead count. I know the concern on the Hill, from Senators who criticized SALT II, will not be met with a focus on warheads. I favor an emphasis on throw-weight limitations.

The President: I agree that we should not have a negotiation position taking an approach linked to SALT. It's obvious that if we do, some will push us to ratify SALT II, which we think is lousy.

Isn't one of the problems with limiting warheads that we cannot easily verify their numbers? That is really an important issue.

Secretary Haig: The thing most difficult to verify would be throw weight, also accuracy.

Dr. Rostow: Ambassador Dobrynin and Premier Brezhnev (in his Spiegel interview) agreed to go beyond national technical means of verification to other measures, in an appropriate START atmosphere.

The President: The land-based missiles are certainly the most important of all. Are they difficult to verify?

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We have to reduce the first-strike sudden threat of the missiles. The bombers take 12 hours to arrive and are easier to spot. The submarines are not so accurate; and both the submarines and bombers can be attacked before they shoot their missiles. The ICBM is different. The greatest psychological factor has to be an emphasis on the land-based missiles and their special threat.

Ambassador Rowny: You are absolutely right. Those missiles are the most destabilizing weapons. SALT II allowed them to build and deploy more.

Dr. Rostow: That's right. They are the most destabilizing weapons.

Judge Clark: Secretary Haig, I believe you wanted to address some of the political aspects.

Secretary Haig: Your decision on the framework of our START position will probably be the most important of your Presidency.

In the past, we let the Soviets build up. McNamara constrained and froze our systems. Then the U.S. let the Soviets go beyond our numbers and never challenged them. Now the Soviets have caught up with us in technology, and they are ahead of us in throw weight.

It is important to remember that the START arms control does not occur in a vacuum. It is related to our overall defense policy, including especially, our strategic modernization program, especially the M-X. The Administration must move quickly, vis-a-vis the Hill, with an agreed deployment mode. This issue is intimately inter-related with START.

All agencies' proposals mark a clear departure from SALT II. All require substantial and asymmetrical Soviet reductions. The real question is whether we are going to have a real, credible, and plausible position. The JCS charts are most revealing. One of them shows that the span of differences among the proposals are not so wide. What really matters is how plain and simple our proposal is. The greatest strength of the November 18 proposal was its simplicity.

I am not impressed by specific numbers, unless these are geared to our own defense requirements. That means we have to preserve the M-X at all cost.

On limiting throw weight, I am worried about verification. [REDACTED] We need a dramatic proposal to reverse the momentum over the peace movement and put you on the side of the Angels. We need to take a look higher than

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that of the IG at the issues. The IG's work so far has been superb. We have heard the IG Chairman, Rick Burt's, presentation. The remaining questions center on the units of measure and on ceilings. You can be proud of your IG.

Finally, I agree with Cap (Weinberger); you need to make your announcement on START before you go to Europe.

The President: It's too bad we cannot do in START what we did in INF, or what Ike (Eisenhower) proposed on all nuclear weapons. First, we need to restore the balance.

Judge Clark: By the May 3 NSC meeting, we will need to work on these issues.

Secretary Weinberger: On the M-X, we had to make a decision involving interim basing. We wanted to get the M-X into existing silos, which was better than to leave them in warehouses. Congress rejected that. Now Congress wants us to decide on a defense basing mode and a permanent one by December 1. That's like asking NIH to come up with a cancer cure by December 1. Dense Pack looks promising for M-X, but we need to do further studies.

The President: How many Titan missile silos do we have (for M-X)?

Secretary Weinberger: There are 52 Titan silos. The Titans are an older generation system. Generally, the Soviets have deployed fifth generation missiles, with the sixth generation follow-on coming down the road, while we are in the fourth generation.

The President: What about those SS-16's? Are they in Kamchatka? I am concerned about our West Coast and Alaska.

Secretary Weinberger: They are very hideable.

Judge Clark: We will be meeting again the week of May 3.

The meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

Attachments

1. START IG Charts (Prepared by Dept of State) -- Presented at Meeting
2. JCS Charts -- Presented at Meeting