

OWL 23: Summarizing the INF Options

The following options were developed based upon Allied consultation and are described in some additional detail in OWL 22. They would replace a portion of the INF decision in NSDD 210. All would begin as outlined in NSDD 210 with the following statement. "The US continues firmly to believe that the best solution remains the global elimination of the entire class of US and Soviet land-based LRINF missiles. We are prepared promptly to negotiate an effective, verifiable agreement to that end, without additional constraints. However, since the Soviet Union continues to refuse to join us in moving immediately to such a global, zero-zero solution, the US proposes ... "

Option A. As an interim step on the road to this goal under this option, the USSR will reduce its LRINF warheads by 80 percent and the U.S. will match the Soviet global warhead level. The remaining systems may be deployed by the United States and the Soviet Union without geographic constraints of any kind.

Option B. As an interim INF agreement, both sides would reduce their LRINF missiles and launchers in Europe and the Far East to zero. The Soviet Union could retain no more than 243-270 warheads on 81-90 SS-20 launchers and missiles. These remaining Soviet LRINF missiles would be deployed only at the existing bases at Novosibirsk and Barnaul in the central USSR. The US would retain an equal number of LRINF warheads on missiles and launchers deployed outside Europe and the Far East. This would result in an equal global ceiling of from 243-270 warheads on LRINF missiles. Both sides would reaffirm the objective of the eventual elimination of all US and Soviet LRINF missiles. The US would continue to seek the firmest possible commitment to the earliest possible date for the eventual elimination of all US and Soviet LRINF missiles.

Option C. As an interim INF agreement, both sides would reduce their LRINF missiles and launchers in Europe and the Far East to zero. The Soviet Union could retain no more than 243-270 warheads on 81-90 SS-20 launchers and missiles. These remaining Soviet LRINF missiles would be deployed only at the existing bases at Novosibirsk and Barnaul in the central USSR. The US would retain an equal number of LRINF warheads on missiles and launchers deployed outside Europe and the Far East. Under this agreement, the USSR and the US would initially reduce their LRINF missile deployments in Europe to 140 launchers, with concurrent proportionate reductions in Asia and the US would freeze its LRINF missile deployments at the December 31, 1985 level of 140 launchers — to be followed by further reductions to the interim outcome stated above. The US would also continue to seek an early date for the elimination of all US and Soviet LRINF missiles, and both sides would reaffirm the objective of the eventual elimination of all US and Soviet LRINF missiles.

Option D. Continue to pursue the option described in NSDD 210 (zero-zero in Europe and 50% reduction in Asia) as briefed to the allies.

Option E. Given the Allied reaction, rather than making an additional move in INF now, the US should reaffirm our November 1985 position which seeks, as an interim agreement, reductions in LRINF in Europe to 140 launchers and concurrent proportional reductions in Asia.

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OWL 22: INF OPTIONS AFTER CONSULTATION

The following options were developed based upon Allied consultation and are described in some additional detail in OWL 22. They would replace a portion of the INF decision in NSDD 210. All would begin as outlined in NSDD 210 with the following statement. "The US continues firmly to believe that the best solution remains the global elimination of the entire class of US and Soviet land-based LRINF missiles. We are prepared promptly to negotiate an effective, verifiable agreement to that end, without additional constraints. However, since the Soviet Union continues to refuse to join us in moving immediately to such a global, zero-zero solution, the US proposes ... "

Option A. As an interim step on the road to this goal under this option, the USSR will reduce its LRINF warheads by 80 percent and the U.S. will match the Soviet global warhead level. The remaining systems may be deployed by the United States and the Soviet Union without geographic constraints of any kind.

Pros:

- Simple to explain and understand.
- Consistent with NSDD 210.
- Avoids implicit compensation for UK and French systems.
- Is completely global in nature, and thereby avoids treating one region differently from another.
- Would give the US the right to retain some LRINF deployments in Europe.
- Meets 1977 NATO High Level Group study requirements for NATO LRINF deterrence (200 to 600 warheads on LRINF missiles in Europe) and retains coupling with NATO.
- Lower global LRINF missile warhead level [255 LRINF warheads] than the current US position [687 LRINF warheads] tabled in November, 1985.
- Warhead unit of account is the best measure of capability and provides US/NATO the greatest degree of force mix flexibility.
- Basing can be achieved in all 5 basing countries.
- Meets Japanese and Chinese concerns in that it avoids treating one region differently from another.

Cons:

- This is essentially a step back to our 1983 INF position (i.e., equal global limits at a level between 0 and 572) and it would be generally seen as less attractive to the Soviet Union than our November 1, 1983, proposal and would be taken as a negative response to Gorbachev's proposal and thus inconsistent with the spirit of the summit.
- It is inconsistent with the US offer not to offset the entire Soviet global deployment with US deployments in Europe and to discuss the mix of US Pershing II and GLCMs in Europe.
- With no regional subceiling, Soviets are free to concentrate all their SS-20s in either Europe or Asia and to move SS-20s back and forth between East and West, making both US matching missiles in Europe and verification even more difficult.

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Option B. As an interim INF agreement, both sides would reduce their LRINF missiles and launchers in Europe and the Far East to zero. The Soviet Union could retain no more than 243-270 warheads on 81-90 SS-20 launchers and missiles. These remaining Soviet LRINF missiles would be deployed only at the existing bases at Novosibirsk and Barnaul in the central USSR. The US would retain an equal number of LRINF warheads on missiles and launchers deployed outside Europe and the Far East. This would result in an equal global ceiling of from 243-270 warheads on LRINF missiles. Both sides would reaffirm the objective of the eventual elimination of all US and Soviet LRINF missiles. The US would continue to seek the firmest possible commitment to the earliest possible date for the eventual elimination of all US and Soviet LRINF missiles.

Pros:

- Stresses global approach.
- Consistent with NSDD 210. (Same basic INF position as in NSDD 210 plus additional constraints on the location of residual INF missiles.)
- Responsive to Japanese concern and suggestions.
- May help verification in constraining deployments to a limited area.
- A substantive move in INF, picking up zero-zero in Europe from the Soviet proposal.
- Lower global LRINF missile warhead level [255 LRINF warheads] than the current US position [687 LRINF warheads] tabled in November 1985 (Option E).
- Warhead unit of account is the best measure of capability and provides US/NATO the greatest degree of force mix flexibility.

Cons:

- Has the same fundamental flaw as the NSDD 210 INF option that was not well received by allies (i.e., that it radically departs from long-established US and NATO principles of genuine equality and globality.
- Leaves the Soviets with LRINF coverage of most of Europe, Japan, and China. In view of the mobility of the SS-20s, they could readily be deployed into range of all of NATO Europe. The US would have no LRINF coverage of the USSR.
- Notwithstanding the "Central USSR" figleaf, it will be characterized prominently in the press as "zero for Europe and 81-90 SS-20s for Asia" thereby continuing problems for the Japanese.
- Undercuts the Governments of NATO basing countries who have made hard-won decisions. Implementation of deployment decisions will be highly problematic with the mere tabling of a US "zero in Europe" option. Chances of US redeployment of LRINF to Europe if the Soviet Union fails to reduce its Asian SS-20s to zero would be impossible as a practical political matter.
- Does not meet the NATO High Level Group study requirements for NATO deterrence in that it does not provide between 200 and 600 US LRINF warheads deployed in Europe as called for in the NATO 1977 study.
- Destabilizing; perceived as decoupling by a number of European Allies.

- Zero US LRINF in Europe while allowing the Soviets to retain at Novosibirisk and Barnaul 80% of the SS-20 warheads it had at the time of NATO's two-track decision in 1979 would make a mockery of that decision by risking the very decoupling of US defense itself from US defense of Europe that it sought to prevent.
- Confining US LRINF out of range of the USSR removes the only significant leverage for elimination of the remaining SS-20s and opens possibilities for Soviet linkages and pressures on other US forces.
- There being no likelihood of the Soviets going to zero, the US and NATO would be faced with a nominally numerically limited SS-20 force which could not be verified with adequate confidence given the mobility and transportability of these weapons and the Soviet propensity for cheating.
- Creates perception of US acquiescence to indirect form of compensation or offset for the USSR for third country nuclear forces or US forward-based systems.
- Restricting US LRINF deployments out of range of the USSR and effectively to the US may be the same as eliminating them, as budget and other pressures undercut our ability to maintain this force in the US.
- Tabling this proposal would give rise to perception that the only major, remaining obstacle to completion of an LRINF accord is the determination of our British and French allies to modernize their obsolescent national nuclear deterrent forces.

Option C. As an interim INF agreement, both sides would reduce their LRINF missiles and launchers in Europe and the Far East to zero. The Soviet Union could retain no more than 243-270 warheads on 81-90 SS-20 launchers and missiles. These remaining Soviet LRINF missiles would be deployed only at the existing bases at Novosibirisk and Barnaul in the central USSR. The US would retain an equal number of LRINF warheads on missiles and launchers deployed outside Europe and the Far East. Under this agreement, the USSR and the US would initially reduce their LRINF missile deployments in Europe to 140 launchers, with concurrent proportionate reductions in Asia and the US would freeze its LRINF missile deployments at the December 31, 1985 level of 140 launchers — to be followed by further reductions to the interim outcome stated above. The US would also continue to seek an early date for the elimination of all US and Soviet LRINF missiles, and both sides would reaffirm the objective of the eventual elimination of all US and Soviet LRINF missiles.

Pros:

- The initial reductions required under this approach are consistent with both NSDD 210, and our current LRINF position.
- The initial reductions (to 140 launchers) meets the NATO High Level Group study criteria for NATO deterrence and supports basing in all 5 basing countries. This could result in initial equal warhead levels in Europe.
- The initial reductions (to 140 launchers) could support basing in all 5 current basing countries in Europe.
- The further interim reductions continue the reduction of "operational" SS-20s with the resulting threat is shared equally by Asia and Europe.
- Meets Japanese, Dutch and some UK concerns.

Cons:

- The approach is fairly complicated, making it difficult to explain and present. The presentation could become confused with the Soviet three phase plan for the elimination of nuclear weapons.
- Use of launcher unit of account in the initial reductions (140 in Europe) restricts US/NATO force mix flexibility. (If warhead equality is maintained in Europe, the launcher unit of account drives the Pershing II force level down by roughly 60%, which is far more than the overall US percentage reduction from 572 to 420-450.)
- The interim reductions leaving Soviet systems at Novosibirsk and Barnaul has the same fundamental flaw as the NSDD 210 INF option that was not well received by allies (i.e., that it radically departs from long-established US and NATO principles of genuine equality and globality.
- The interim reductions also leaves the Soviets with LRINF coverage of most of Europe, Japan, and China. In view of the mobility of the SS-20s, they could readily be deployed into range of all of NATO Europe. The US would have no LRINF coverage of the USSR.
- Notwithstanding the "Central USSR" figleaf, it will be characterized prominently in the press as "zero for Europe and 81-90 SS-20s for Asia" thereby continuing problems for the Japanese.
- Undercuts the Governments of NATO basing countries who have made hard-won decisions. Implementation of deployment decisions will be highly problematic with the mere tabling of a US "zero in Europe" option. Chances of US redeployment of LRINF to Europe if the Soviet Union fails to reduce its Asian SS-20s to zero would be impossible as a practical political matter.
- Does not meet the NATO High Level Group study requirements for NATO deterrence in that it does not provide between 200 and 600 US LRINF warheads deployed in Europe as called for in the NATO 1977 study.
- Destabilizing; perceived as decoupling by a number of European Allies (UK, France, etc.)
- Zero US LRINF in Europe while allowing the Soviets to retain at Novosibirsk and Barnaul 80% of the SS-20 warheads it had at the time of NATO's two-track decision in 1979 would make a mockery of that decision by risking the very decoupling of US defense itself from US defense of Europe that it sought to prevent.
- Confining US LRINF out of range of the USSR removes the only significant leverage for elimination of the remaining SS-20s and opens possibilities for Soviet linkages and pressures on other US forces.
- There being no likelihood of the Soviets going to zero, the US and NATO would be faced with a nominally numerically limited SS-20 force which could not be verified with adequate confidence given the mobility and transportability of these weapons and the Soviet propensity for cheating.
- Creates perception of US acquiescence to indirect form of compensation or offset for the USSR for third country forces or US forward-based systems.
- Restricting US LRINF deployments out of range of the USSR and effectively to the US may be the same as eliminating them, as budget and other pressures undercut our ability to maintain this force in the US.
- Tabling this proposal would give rise to perception that the only major, remaining obstacle to completion of an LRINF accord is the determination of our British and French allies to modernize their obsolescent national nuclear deterrent forces.

Option D. Continue to pursue the option described in NSDD 210 (zero-zero in Europe and 50% reduction in Asia) as briefed to the allies.

Pros:

- Eliminates all LRINF missiles in Europe and this seems to fall in line with the US zero-zero global approach.
- Reduces by 1/2 the Soviet threat in Asia.
- Maintains US right to an equal US global warhead level.

Cons:

- Does not meet NATO High Level Group deterrence criteria.
- Risks decoupling in Europe.
- Restricting US LRINF to the US removes major leverage for the eventual elimination of the remaining SS-20 force.
- Soviets could perceive this proposal as acknowledging their "right" to some level of SS-20s to offset third countries and/or US "forward based systems."
- Will be perceived by Asians that they are less important to the US than our NATO allies.
- Will confirm suspicions of some allies that our "consultations" were merely perfunctory and announcements of final US positions. Could cause serious alliance management problems in the future.

Option E. Given the Allied reaction, rather than making an additional move in INF now, the US should reaffirm our November 1985 position which seeks, as an interim agreement, reductions in LRINF in Europe to 140 launchers and concurrent proportional reductions in Asia.

Pros:

- Couples US and NATO and meets NATO deterrence criteria.
- Basing can be achieved in 5 basing countries.
- Could result in equal warheads in Europe while meeting Japanese concerns.
- Calls on Soviets to address fully our relatively new November proposal. They have so far attempted to brush it off without adequate attention.

Cons:

- Use of launcher unit of account restricts US/NATO force mix flexibility.
- Would result in a US response to Gorbachev which includes no change at all in our Nuclear and Space Talks position. This could have adverse political, Congressional and public relations consequences.
- Lack of substantive response by the US to the Gorbachev proposal will present the Soviets with a public relations bonanza; the US will be portrayed as incapable of responding constructively to a Soviet initiative that is perceived as having some utility.