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STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATIONS, 1968

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During the course of meetings with Ambassador Dobrynin (January 4, 5, 9), Secretary of State Rusk discussed further the question of moving forward on strategic arms talks.

In accordance with instructions sent on January 20<sup>1</sup> Ambassador Thompson on January 22nd presented to Premier Kosygin a message from President Johnson which, in addition to expressing satisfaction with the progress on the non-proliferation treaty, conveyed the President's sense of urgency over the two related issues of limiting the strategic nuclear arms race and restraining the delivery of armaments to the Middle East. The President emphasized that in proposing discussions between the United States and the USSR he in no way was seeking military advantage. Premier Kosygin said the Soviets were still studying the problem, and would study the points made in the President's message and give their views later.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> To Moscow, tel. 102228, Jan. 20, 1968, Secret/Nodis. In view of the fact that the tempo of diplomatic efforts and internal preparations relating to the strategic missile talks increased during 1968, the documents cited here are included in the attached documentary annex.

<sup>2</sup> From Moscow, tel. 2529, Jan. 22, 1968, Secret/Nodis.

ARMS CONTROL DISARMAMENT AGENCY  
FOIA, PA, E.O. Exemptions  
( ) Deny  
( ) Release ( ) Declassify  
( ) Exclude ( ) Declassify in part  
Downgrade to ( ) S or ( ) O, OADR  
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by authority of B.F. Whipl (130174)  
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In a conversation on January 24 with General Davis, ACDA Assistant Director, General Meshcheryakov, the Soviet Military Attache, indicated that the Soviets would like to hear some specifics about limitations on offensive weapons. He specifically mentioned Multiple Independently-Targeted Re-entry Vehicles (MIRVs) and Poseidon as examples of U.S. offensive escalation.<sup>1</sup> In a subsequent conversation on February 23, General Meshcheryakov told General Davis that Marshal Grechko, Soviet Minister of Defense, had given him permission to talk with General Davis about arms control matters.<sup>2</sup> However, there were no subsequent talks in this channel.

On April 5, Ambassador Dobrynin, in response to a question from Ambassador Bohlen, indicated that a concrete suggestion from the United States for discussion would be helpful to those in the Soviet Union who favored disarmament talks. He said those opposed to talks argued that the United States was just going through the motions and was not serious.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Memcon, Davis/Meshcheryakov, Jan. 24, 1968, Secret/Limdis.

<sup>2</sup> Memcon, Davis/Meshcheryakov, Feb. 23, 1968, Secret/Limdis.

<sup>3</sup> Memcon, Dobrynin/Thompson and Bohlen, Apr. 5, 1968, Secret/Nodis.

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Also on April 5, Ambassador Bohlen and Mr. Foster sent separate memoranda to Secretary Rusk recommending differing tactical approaches to the Soviet Union. Mr. Bohlen recommended that an oral statement be delivered to Premier Kosygin or the highest available responsible Soviet official which would include a somewhat more specific proposal that representatives of State, ACDA, and DOD/ISA had been working on. The salient features of this proposal were that initiation of construction of any additional strategic offensive missile launchers (including MR/IRBMs) be prohibited; and a limit be imposed on the number (to be negotiated) of anti-missile launchers and associated radars which each side could deploy. The United States would be prepared to rely exclusively on national means of verification if these limitations applied only to fixed land-based missile systems. We would propose that in view of the difficulty of verifying through national means the deployment of sea-based or mobile-based strategic missile launchers, the possibility of an agreed limitation applying to these weapons could be the subject of discussion.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Bohlen to Rusk, memorandum, Apr. 5, 1968, Top Secret/NoDis.

Mr. Foster argued that this proposal would appear to the Soviets to be heavily weighted in favor of United States strategic interests, and thus would be counter-productive in terms of the initial objective of inducing the Soviets to initiate discussions. He suggested instead a letter from the President to Premier Kosygin which set forth basic objectives and principles from which the strategic arms talks should proceed but did not outline a more specific proposal. Mr. Foster also suggested that in view of Soviet interest in the successful conclusion of the non-proliferation treaty, they might be persuaded that a joint US/USSR announcement at the General Assembly, due to resume on April 24, of an agreement to initiate talks would make a significant contribution to the chances of having the treaty opened for signature that summer.<sup>1</sup> The draft letter to Kosygin included this suggestion.

No decision was taken immediately by the Secretary. In a memorandum of April 22 to the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff opposed presenting to the Soviets the specific negotiating proposal contained in the April 5 oral statement. They objected on the grounds that the proposal

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<sup>1</sup> Foster to Rusk memorandum, Apr. 5, 1968, with attached draft letter from President Johnson to Chairman Kosygin, Top Secret/Nodis.

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did not meet the following previously expressed JCS criteria that any arms control proposal must: 1) maintain overall U.S. quantitative and qualitative superiority in strategic forces; 2) permit the U.S. freedom to modernize its forces and develop future capabilities; and 3) provide a means for verification other than "sole reliance on unilateral intelligence." <sup>1</sup> On April 23, the matter was discussed at the President's luncheon meeting with Secretaries Rusk and Clifford, but no decision was reached.

On April 25, Messrs. Foster and Bohlen agreed upon and sent to the Secretary a compromise whereby: (1) an oral statement which contained an outline of an initial US negotiating proposal and a discussion of certain principles which would underlie an agreement to limit strategic missiles would be given to Kosygin or Gromyko; and (2) a letter would be sent from the President to Premier Kosygin proposing the joint announcement at the General Assembly of a decision to

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<sup>1</sup> Wheeler to Clifford, memorandum, Apr. 22, 1968, Top Secret/Nodis.

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begin strategic missile talks within a specific time period.<sup>1</sup> If this package were not approved, Mr. Foster favored sending a letter alone, but Mr. Bohlen recommended that in this event nothing be sent. On April 26, the Secretary approved and sent to the White House the recommended package which was concurred in by Secretary Clifford.

On April 30 the President decided upon a different message which made no reference to a specific negotiating proposal but included the proposal for an announcement at the General Assembly of an American-Soviet agreement to begin bilateral arms limitation negotiations. This message took the form of a letter from the President to Kosygin and was given to Ambassador Dobrynin by Secretary Rusk on May 3. On receipt of the letter the Ambassador told the Secretary that he thought there might be some forthcoming word from Moscow in the near future.<sup>2</sup>

An official of the Soviet Academy of Sciences told Henry Kissinger in mid-May at a Pugwash meeting that a joint proposal by the Soviet foreign and defense ministries to accept the U.S.

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1 Foster and Bohlen to Rusk, memorandum, Apr. 25, 1968, Top Secret/Nodis.

2 To Moscow, tel. 159227, May 7, 1968, Top Secret/Nodis. ✓

initiative for talks was forwarded to the Central Committee to the CPSU on April 30.<sup>1</sup> However, on May 17 First Deputy Foreign Minister Kuznetsov told the Secretary that the subject of a response to the U.S. initiative was still under consideration in Moscow.<sup>2</sup> On May 20 Mr. Kuznetsov, in speaking to the General Assembly First Committee, repeated an April 26 statement to the effect that the USSR was prepared to agree on concrete steps aimed at limiting and, subsequently, reducing strategic means of delivery of nuclear weapons and would be prepared to exchange views with states concerned.<sup>3</sup> In a conversation with the Secretary on June 14, Mr. Kuznetsov remained non-committal on when a Soviet response to the U.S. initiative would be forthcoming.<sup>4/</sup>

On June 18, Mr. Fisher asked Ambassador Mendeleovich when we could expect an answer on the U.S. request for talks. Ambassador Mendeleovich replied the USSR was not against the talks, but that holding them was a very delicate matter and had to be decided as part of the total international situation.<sup>5</sup>

1 To Moscow, tel. 170545, May 24, 1968, Secret/Nodis. ✓

2 Ibid

3 Ibid

4 Memcon, Kuznetsov/Rusk, June 14, 1968, Secret/Exdis. ✓

5 Memcon, Mendeleovich/Fisher, June 18, 1968, Secret/Exdis. ✓

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On June 27, Foreign Minister Gromyko, in a speech to the Supreme Soviet, publicly announced that the "Soviet Government was ready for an exchange of opinion" on the limitation and reduction of strategic delivery systems.<sup>1</sup>

On June 28, Mr. Vorontsov of the Soviet Embassy told Assistant Secretary of Defense Warnke that the Soviet negotiating team had been pretty well worked out and that because of Vietnam it would not be practicable for them to hold the talks in Moscow or Washington. Vorontsov speculated that the talks could be held in conjunction with the ENDC in Geneva, with someone like Mr. Foster dealing one day with ENDC matters and the next with the bilateral talks.<sup>2</sup>

On June 28, Under Secretary of State Katzenbach gave to Soviet Charge Tcherniakov a copy of the following statement President Johnson would make (and which he did make) at the NPT signing ceremony concerning the talks:

An arrangement has been reached between the Governments of the USSR and the USA to enter in the nearest future into discussions on the limitation and reduction of both offensive strategic nuclear weapons delivery systems and systems of defense against ballistic missiles.

1 Moscow, Tass International Service in English, Jun.27, 1968, Unclassified.

2 Mamcon, Vorontsov/Warnke, Jun.28, 1968, Secret.

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Mr. Katzenbach pointed out that the text was not identical with the Soviet-proposed statement but the substance was the same.<sup>1</sup> Ambassador Thompson reported from Moscow that Ambassador Dobrynin told him on June 28 that his understanding was that talks would begin in Moscow but would be transferred to Geneva later where they would continue on a bilateral basis.<sup>2</sup>

On June 29 Soviet Charge Tcherniakov delivered to Ambassador Bohlen an advance copy of the nine-point memorandum on Soviet disarmament proposals which was to be made public.<sup>3</sup> Ambassador Bohlen pointed out that our desire in regard to the discussion on the limitation of offensive and defensive nuclear weapons systems had been that this discussion should originally be on a bilateral basis and that their memorandum proposed to use the ENDC as a substitute for this approach. The Charge said he personally did not see any conflict and did not feel that this suggestion was a substitute for bilateral discussions.<sup>4</sup> On July 1 Premier Kosygin told Ambassador

1 To Moscow, tel.193331, June 28, 1968, Secret/Nodis. ✓

2 From Moscow, tel.4442, June 29, 1968, Secret/Nodis. ✓

3 A/7134, July 8, 1968.

4 Memcon, Bohlen/Tcherniakov, June 29, 1968, Secret/Nodis. ✓

Thompson that in view of the aforementioned memorandum he would not refer to the strategic missile matter in his statement at the Moscow NPT signing ceremony. Kosygin did not respond when Ambassador Thompson said he supposed we would now have to fix a time and place for talks.<sup>1</sup>

Paralleling these diplomatic efforts to engage the Soviets in bilateral talks, work in Washington progressed on developing a detailed U.S. position. On March 16, 1968, ACDA gave Secretary Rusk a briefing on their proposed approach to controlling the strategic arms race. An ACDA staff study encompassing the material provided Secretary Rusk was circulated to other interested agencies on April 11. The purpose of this study was to provide a framework for understanding the problem of reaching a U.S.-Soviet agreement on controlling the strategic arms race. It recommended the following four principles for shaping arms control policies:

(1) Any strategic arms limitation agreement must provide balanced strategic postures acceptable to both sides and should affect both offensive and defensive forces.

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1 From Moscow, Tel. 4452, July 1, 1968. Secret/Exdis. ✓

(2) Under an agreement, both sides should be confident of a reasonable second-strike deterrent force.

(3) National means of verification will be adequate for a number of important strategic arms control constraints; for other more comprehensive measures, supplementary inspection arrangements would probably be necessary.

(4) The first step in achieving strategic arms control is to level off with current force commitments.

On the basis of these principles the study went on to elaborate on the strategic-technical elements involved in a missile launcher freeze as it would affect four major weapons systems: (1) Anti-Ballistic Missiles (ABMs); (2) Multiple Independently-Targeted Re-entry Vehicles (MIRVs); (3) Fixed Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs); and (4) Sub-Launched Ballistic Missiles (SLBMs)/mobile ICBMs. At this point in time, a critical issue was whether or not limitations should be placed upon MIRV development and deployment.

The study concluded that a three-step approach was required for successful agreement: First, agreement on the basic objectives and principles of arms control; secondly,

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development of a common appreciation of the critical elements to be controlled; and finally, formulation and agreement upon specific measures. This procedural approach was the theoretical basis for the ACDA position on whether or not to submit a specific proposal to the Soviets in order to induce them to begin the talks.<sup>1</sup>

In a memorandum dated July 8, Secretary Rusk outlined the organizational procedures for formulating, coordinating and deciding upon U.S. Government policy with regard to the strategic missile talks with the Soviets.<sup>2</sup> ACDA was given primary responsibility for the preparation for and backstopping of U.S. Government participation in these talks. Major policy issues were to be submitted by ACDA to the Secretary through an Executive Committee of the Committee of Principals.

On July 4 a draft basic position paper for the talks, prepared jointly by the Department of State and ACDA, was sent to members of the Executive Committee of the Committee of Principals.<sup>3</sup> This paper and an attached draft opening statement

1 ACDA Staff Study, "Strategic Arms Control for 1968", Apr. 16, 1968, Top Secret-Restricted Data.

2 Rusk to Members of Interagency Working Group on SALT, memorandum, Jul. 8, 1968, Confidential.

3 Memorandum for Executive Committee of Committee of Principals, "Strategic Missile Talks" (C), with attached papers, Jul. 4, 1968, Top Secret/Nodis.

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essentially accepted the principles and policy conclusions outlined in ACDA's April paper with the significant exception that the question of Multiple Independently-Targeted Reentry Vehicles (MIRVs) was to be left to the Soviets to raise. A specific launcher limitation proposal based on these conclusions was embodied in the draft opening statement.

On July 8 the Executive Committee met for the first time. It established a Working Group chaired by ACDA Deputy Director Fisher, to develop positions and issues for consideration by the Executive Committee; asked the Department of Defense to draft an opening statement to be considered along with the draft already circulated, directed that in drafting the opening statement consideration be given to the possibility of consulting on the completed statement with Congress, and endorsed the U.S. Intelligence Board action to prepare an updated Special National Intelligence Estimate (SNIE) on U.S. national capabilities to verify various strategic arms control measures.<sup>1</sup>

The Working Group met for the first time on July 9 and set a target date of August 15 for an agreed position on a specific

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes of meeting of Executive Committee of Committee of Principals, July 8, 1968, Secret/Exdis.

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proposal to submit to the Soviets. The Working Group discussed potential problems and issues that would have to be studied in depth in the areas of verification, military effects and diplomatic negotiations, and assigned responsibility for papers to individual members. Ambassador Bohlen noted that initiation of MIRV testing scheduled for August might coincide with the opening of the talks. He suggested that thought be given to either postponing the tests or at least revising current plans for publicizing them. It was agreed to look at the question at a further meeting.<sup>1</sup> The Working Group met several times during the remainder of July and under its auspices the following key documents were completed or were in preparation: (1) a revised draft U.S. proposal, circulated to the Executive Committee on July 31<sup>2</sup>; (2) a revised draft of the U.S. opening statement; (3) SNIE 11-13-68 evaluating U.S. national capabilities to verify possible strategic arms control agreements; (4) answers to additional detailed questions related to SNIE 11-13-68

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- 1 Summary of 7/9/68 meeting of Working Group, Secret/Exdis. ✓  
2 Memorandum for Executive Committee of Principals, "Preparations for Strategic Missile Talks", with attached paper, July 31, 1968, ~~Top Secret/Medic~~ CONFIDENTIAL ✓

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completed by CIA and DIA on August 5<sup>1</sup>; (5) SNIE 11-15-68, a study of Soviet military options if an agreement along the lines of the U.S. proposal was reached; (6) a DOD-prepared military analysis of the U.S. proposed position<sup>2</sup>.

The revised draft position paper contained three basic changes from the July 4 draft. The reference to the need for an understanding that evidence of production of mobile ABM systems by the Soviets would be considered as an indication of intent to deploy and would be grounds for considering withdrawal from the entire agreement was deleted. A provision was added that there would be no replacement of ballistic or cruise missile submarines within the first five years of the agreement. Finally, a section on provisions for review and withdrawal was added.

The Executive Committee met on August 7 to review the July 31 position paper and to hear a DOD briefing evaluating the effect of this proposal and its possible abrogation on the

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1 CIA/DIA, US Capabilities to Verify Proposed Missile Limitation Agreement, memorandum, August 5, 1968, Top Secret/Nodis.  
2 DOD, Analysis of State/ACDA Proposal on Strategic Offensive & Defensive Systems, memorandum, July 22, 1968, Top Secret.

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assured destruction and damage limiting capabilities of the US and the USSR through 1976. The DOD study concluded that:

- (1) even if the Soviets abrogated the agreement, the United States would maintain its assured destruction capability;
- (2) Soviet conversion of the Tallinn system to an effective long-range ABM was an unlikely but potentially serious threat to the U.S. deterrent, thus it would be of prime importance that either Tallinn be limited in numbers or that we had confidence that it could not or would not be converted to an ABM;
- (3) the Soviets might view the agreement as a threat to their assured destruction capability and may want to limit ABM or ban MIRVs;
- (4) the United States could have good confidence in its assured destruction capability even in the face of cheating or abrogation by the Soviets (Tallinn conversion problem excepted), and the U.S. limited force would perform as well against the Soviet limited force as would our programmed force against the high NIPP-68 estimated Soviet force;
- (5) improvements in missile accuracy would make our ICBMs vulnerable in their present silos, thus measures to maintain survivability should be considered in the agreement negotiations;
- (6) damage-limiting capability of either side would not be significantly affected.

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Secretary Rusk reaffirmed that the President wished to move ahead with the U.S.-USSR talks. He stated that it was the job of the Executive Committee not to find arguments why an agreement could not be attained, but to determine how this could be done consistent with maintaining U.S. security. The Executive Committee agreed that the agencies should prepare their views on the draft U.S. proposal for discussion at their next meeting scheduled for August 14. The Committee also agreed that MIRV flight testing should proceed as scheduled, that ACDA should make a study of the form of an agreement that might be reached with the Soviets, and that contingency papers for handling the MIRV and bomber questions should be prepared in the event they are raised by the Soviets<sup>1</sup>. During the discussion of possible treaty violations, Secretary Rusk suggested that perhaps a joint U.S.-USSR commission on strategic missiles could continuously review the situation so that any issues which arose could be clarified rapidly. This might avert a situation where the government would be locked into a position where abrogation would be a major political act.

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1 Minutes of Meeting of the Executive Committee of Committee of Principals, Aug. 7, 1968, Top Secret/Nodis. ✓

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On August 12 the Joint Chiefs of Staff submitted a statement of their views on the July 31 missile talks proposal<sup>1</sup>. The most significant point made was that no restriction should be placed on ABM associated radars because of possible erroneous categorization of similar radars as integral ballistic missile defense elements. The Working Group accepted the changes proposed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and submitted a revised version of the Strategic Missile Talks Proposal on August 13<sup>2</sup>. However, the State, ACDA, and White House members of the Working Group made their agreement to deletion of the restriction on associated radars provisional. It was agreed that the problem should be studied further, especially in its relation to possible upgrading of the Tallinn system, and that it would have to be discussed during negotiations with Soviet representatives. On August 14 the Executive Committee approved this proposal and it was forwarded to the President for his approval on August 15 by the Secretary of State<sup>3</sup>. The U.S. proposal contained the following elements:

- 1 Gen.Allison (JCS) to ASFisher, memorandum, Aug.12, 1968, with attached memorandum for Secretary of Defense, dated Aug.9, 1968, Top Secret/Sensitive.
- 2 Memorandum for Executive Committee of Committee of Principals, "Preparations for Strategic Missile Talks" (U), with attached paper, Aug.13, 1968, ~~Top Secret~~ **SECRET**
- 3 Foster to Rusk memorandum, Aug.14, 1968, with attached memorandum from 1) Rusk, 8/15/68; 2) Rusk & Foster, 8/15/68; 3) Clifford, 8/13/68, to the President, Top Secret.

Cessation of the initiation of construction of any additional strategic offensive land-based missile launchers (ICBMs and IR/MRBMs). Construction of launchers underway as of September 1, 1968, could be completed.

A total ban on mobile land-based offensive and defensive strategic missile systems and of sea-based defensive strategic missile systems.

Cessation of the construction of additional strategic offensive missile launching submarines or of additional launchers in existing submarines. Construction of submarines underway as of September 1, 1968, could be completed, subject to agreement on this number. (However, the initial U.S. presentation would be more restrictive, omitting any reference to the completion of submarines under construction.) The fitting out of surface ships with facilities for firing strategic offensive ballistic missiles would be prohibited.

The deployment by each side of no more than a set and equivalent number of fixed, land-based anti-ballistic missile launchers and associated missiles (the number to be negotiated).

The proposal would not include limitations on aircraft or anti-aircraft defenses, nor prohibition of technological improvement (e.g., MIRVs) within the constraints of the agreement.

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The U. S. proposal has been drawn up on the basis that in each instance we could agree to exclusive reliance on national means of verification, though we would first make a concerted effort to gain Soviet agreement to additional means of providing reassurance for certain areas of the agreement.

The proposal was accompanied by a separate memorandum from Secretary Rusk and Mr. Foster containing the specific views of the Department of State and ACDA and a memorandum from Secretary Clifford containing the views of the Department of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. In their memorandum to the President, Secretary Rusk and Mr. Foster summed up their support for the U. S. proposal as follows. Politically, an agreement such as this would profoundly alter the complexion of East-West relations and provide a climate wherein cooperative efforts would not only facilitate other arms control measures, but also could be directed toward solving other critical world problems. Militarily, an agreement would enhance strategic stability for each side, would maintain a secure deterrent which would not be threatened by a spiraling arms race which,

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in the absence of an agreement, could only lead to larger and more destructive arsenals on both sides. U.S. strategic forces are adequate, with presently programmed improvements which are not affected, to cope with the Soviet threat if it is contained as envisaged in the U.S. proposal. Our national means of verifying Soviet compliance with the agreement are such that violations that could upset the strategic balance would be detected in time for corrective measures to be taken.

Upon approval by the President of the basic proposal for planning purposes, the Working Group returned to the task of drafting an agreed Initial Presentation and a basic position paper to serve as guidelines governing the U.S. position during first phase of the talks. By August 20, Working Group agreement was reached on the initial presentation and the basic position paper, except for a JCS objection to a paragraph in the latter which would defer discussion of the form that an agreement might take. These were forwarded to the Executive Committee on August 21 for consideration at its August 22 meeting.<sup>1</sup>

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1 Memorandum for the Executive Committee of Committee of Principals, August 21, 1968 with attached "Initial Presentation of U.S. Position", Aug. 20, 1968 and "Basic Position Paper", Aug. 20, 1968, ~~Top Secret/NOFORN~~. CONFIDENTIAL ✓

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On August 22 the Department of Defense representative requested a Working Group meeting to consider changes in the two papers submitted to the Executive Committee the day before. The most important of these were: (a) added language bearing on the degree to which the delegation should push for supplementary inspection procedures; (b) modification of language dealing with how to approach, within the context of an anti-ballistic missile limitation, the possibility of the Soviets upgrading the Tallinn system; and (c) addition to paragraph 1, Section X, of the position paper of the sentence, "An agreement embodying this U.S. proposal would have to be in the form of a treaty." <sup>1/</sup>

In the diplomatic area, the Soviet Union, after considerable delay which appeared to have been caused by internal disagreements in Moscow centering around military officials, informed the United States, shortly before the invasion of Czechoslovakia, that it was prepared to begin talks between special representatives in Geneva on September 30. However, as a result of the

<sup>1/</sup> Memorandum for the Executive Committee of Committee of Principals, "Agreed Changes on Initial Presentation & Basic Position Paper," Aug. 22, 1968, Top Secret.

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invasion and uncertainties about events in Europe, the United States delayed the opening of talks.

Nevertheless, the Executive Committee met on the afternoon of August 22 to consider the Working Group paper of August 21 and the proposed Department of Defense changes thereto. Secretary Rusk opened the meeting by pointing out that the question of going ahead with the talks and the timing were now obviously uncertain in view of the Czechoslovak situation. However, the purpose of the Executive Committee meeting was not to consider that, but to give to the President the wherewithal to go ahead with the talks if and when he desired.

The Executive Committee then proceeded to deal as follows with the unresolved questions resulting from the Working Group deliberations.

- (1) Hereafter the term "national" means of verification would be used in place of "unilateral" or "external."
- (2) The section in the Basic Position Paper dealing with exploring the problem of verification with the Soviets was amended to add,

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This concept should be pursued during these portions of the negotiation, but not to the extent of prejudicing the negotiations or precluding, if so instructed, reliance solely on national means of verification.

- (3) The section in the basic position paper dealing with the U. S. negotiating position on the Tallinn system was amended to include,

The delegation should seek to elicit information on the Tallinn system to assure us that it is not and will not be upgraded into an ABM system. Our main aim would be to satisfy ourselves that the Tallinn system is not and will not be upgraded into an ABM system without our knowledge. If we cannot satisfy ourselves on this matter, then Tallinn launchers must be limited and included in the agreed Soviet ABM level.

- (4) With regard to the form that an agreement might take, it was agreed that forms other than a treaty should not be excluded at this time, and the delegation should seek instructions if the matter was raised by the Soviets.<sup>1/</sup>

The additions and changes were incorporated in the revised initial presentation and basic position papers which were

<sup>1/</sup> Minutes of the Executive Committee of Committee of Principals, Aug. 22, 1968, ~~Top Secret/No Dis~~

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sent to the President and approved by him on August 27.<sup>1/</sup>

Subsequent activity of the Working Group centered on the two unresolved problems of whether radar restrictions should be included in an anti-ballistic missile limitation agreement; and of defining the items that should be subject to selective direct observation on Soviet and U. S. territory and procedures for such direct observation.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff in a memorandum submitted on September 6 analyzed various factors they considered significant in appraising both the feasibility and desirability of a limitation on radars.<sup>2/</sup> They concluded that while a limitation might be desirable, the basic question of feasibility is the controlling consideration which preempts the question of desirability, and a limitation

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1/ Fisher to Rusk, memorandum, Aug. 26, 1968, Top Secret/Nodis with attached memorandum from Rusk to the President, Aug. 27, 1968, to which are attached papers, "Initial Presentation of U.S. Position" and "Basic Position Paper," Aug. 24, 1968, Top Secret/Nodis.

2/ Gen. Wheeler to Committee of Principals, memorandum, "ABM Associated Radars in SALT Proposal," Sept. 9, 1968 with attached memorandum from Gen. Allison to Chairman, JCS, Sept. 4, 1968, Top Secret.

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on ABM associated radars would be counter to U. S. purposes. The essential points in the JCS argument were: (1) large phased-array radars essential to an ABM system could not be differentiated from similar radars which might be desirable for air defense systems, space tracking and air traffic control, (2) it would be very difficult to establish some degree of equivalence between U. S. and Soviet radars, and (3) detailed technical restrictions on radar characteristics would be complicated to negotiate and difficult to verify. On September 24, ACDA submitted to the Working Group its analysis on the issue in which they concluded that these problems are not insurmountable and therefore limitations on ABM-associated radars were feasible and should be included as part of any ABM agreement. An amended forwarding memorandum on September 26 stated that the ACDA analysis was for information only. ACDA contended that a limitation on radars was desirable because it would add greatly to U.S. confidence in its ability to verify, by national means, limitations on Soviet ABM deployments, especially any attempt to upgrade the Tallinn air defense system. Further meetings of the

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Working Group were not held and thus no consensus was reached by the Working Group on this question.

On October 4, ACDA distributed to the Working Group members draft instructions on "selective direct observation," <sup>1/</sup> i.e., some form of adversary on-site inspection. This draft was for information purposes only, and Working Group consideration of it awaited further development in the negotiating situation regarding the issue of whether and when to hold the talks with the USSR. The draft isolated three areas in which selective direct observations could be justified and would be demonstrably useful in reducing uncertainties.

These were:

- (a) Tallinn complexes;
- (b) Soviet submarine and surface ship construction facilities;
- (c) IR/MRBM sites.

This was supplemented by distribution on October 8 of detailed working papers on each of these three subjects.

On September 12 (correction sent out September 19), ACDA distributed to Working Group members a proposed instruction on how to handle missile research and space

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<sup>1/</sup> Memorandum for Members of the Working Group, "Selective Direct Observation," Oct. 4, 1968, Top Secret Nodis.

launchers. ACDA proposed that land-based Research, Development, Testing and Evaluation (RDT&E) offensive missile launchers and space launchers not be permitted to exceed 10 percent of the total operational strategic land-based and sea-based launcher level. A similar agreed level of ABM RDT&E launchers would be determined following agreement on an ABM launcher level. Test launchers for land-based mobile offensive and all mobile defensive systems would be completely prohibited.<sup>1/</sup> Discussion of this draft also awaited developments in the negotiations situation.

As noted earlier, the U.S. as a result of the Czechoslovak invasion did not take up the Soviet offer to open talks in Geneva on September 30. Nevertheless, following the invasion Soviet diplomats continued to express a desire to press forward with the missile talks.

In subsequent months discussion continued within the Administration as to whether or not the missile talks should proceed despite Czechoslovakia. The State Department in a draft cable on September 6 proposed to consult

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<sup>1/</sup> Memorandum, Sept. 12, 1968, "Missile RDT&E & Space Launchers," Top Secret. ✓

in the North Atlantic Council on the possibility of going ahead with the strategic arms talks. However, the Joint Chiefs of Staff strongly opposed this course of action and it was not pursued.<sup>1/</sup> Mr. Foster, in a memorandum to Secretary Rusk on September 12, urged the Secretary to take up the matter of NAC consultations with the President.<sup>2/</sup>

On October 17 Mr. Fisher recommended to Secretary Rusk that he transmit to the President a memorandum from Mr. Fisher which recommended that the President propose bilateral talks start sometime in the week of October 21.<sup>3/</sup> The Secretary decided not to transmit the memorandum. The thrust of Mr. Fisher's argument was that if talks were not begun before the new Administration came into office, they most probably would not get started before late spring or early summer of 1969. In the interim both the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. might proceed with aspects of their weapons development programs, such as multiple independently-targeted re-entry vehicle (MIRV) flight testing or mobile missile deployment, that might prevent the successful outcome of any strategic arms control talks.

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- <sup>1/</sup> Gen. Wheeler to Clifford, memorandum, Sept. 10, 1968, Top Secret/Exdis, with attached draft telegram, Sept. 6, 1968, Top Secret/Exdis.
- <sup>2/</sup> Foster to Rusk, memorandum, Sept. 12, 1968, Secret/Limdis.
- <sup>3/</sup> Fisher to Rusk, memorandum, Oct. 17, 1968, Top Secret/Nodis.

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In the meantime arrangements concerning possible opening of bilateral talks were being handled personally by Secretary Rusk and Mr. Rostow in the White House who continued to have informal contacts with Ambassador Dobrynin about SALT and a possible Summit meeting. The text of a possible Summit communique that would set up the talks and establish Objectives and Principles to guide them was discussed and drafts were exchanged.

On September 16, Mr. Walt Rostow, at President Johnson's direction, delivered to Ambassador Dobrynin a statement of SALT objectives based on those contained in the paper approved by the President on August 27, 1968.<sup>1/</sup> The Soviets responded with a revised and undated (but between September 16 and December 1) statement of Objectives and Principles,<sup>2/</sup> which was reviewed by the Secretaries of State and Defense, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

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- <sup>1/</sup> Walt Rostow to Amb. Dobrynin, informal memorandum, Sept. 16, 1968, Secret.
- <sup>2/</sup> Amb. Dobrynin to Walt Rostow, informal memorandum, undated, Top Secret/Eyes Only.

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Discussions of the Soviet draft continued throughout December, focusing on five suggested changes contained in an undated memorandum from Secretary Clifford to Secretary Rusk.<sup>1/</sup> Secretary Clifford and General Wheeler suspected the Soviets were trying to provide for an adjustment in the existing balance to bring about numerical equality in some respects. The Clifford memorandum pointed out that this was undesirable because of asymmetries in both the forces and security needs of the U.S. and the USSR. It recommended that the U.S. take the position that effective deterrence now exists and the proper objective should be to "maintain a stable U.S.-Soviet strategic deterrence." To this end Secretary Clifford suggested dropping the word achieve from the first proposed objective and the reference to equal security from the third proposed principle. The first deletion was agreed to, but since the McCloy-Zorin Joint Statement of Agreed Principles for Disarmament Negotiations, September 20, 1961, states that "all measures of general and complete disarmament should be balanced so that at no stage in the treaty could any state or group of states gain military advantage and that security is assured equally for all", it was agreed to rephrase the Soviet draft to read, "and security should be assured equally for both sides."

1/ Clifford to Rusk, memorandum, undated, Top Secret. ✓

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The Clifford memorandum noted that the first two basic principles covered essentially the same subject matter but phrased it differently. Since the phrasing in the second principle would appear to cover manned bombers but not bomber defenses, it was suggested that it be dropped, leaving the first principle with its more general language. This was accomplished by combining the two principles and using the phrase "offensive and defensive weapons systems" throughout.

A fourth change suggested (and accepted) was to make the following changes in the paragraph proposing bilateral study of means for preventing the development of situations which pose the risk of escalation to nuclear war: "to study the question of taking steps to rule-out minimize the possible accidental appearance of conflict-fraught situations involving the use of strategic armaments."

The final DOD point merely noted that the Soviet memorandum did not rule out the DOD position that any agreement should be in the form of a treaty.

A further revised version was then approved for consideration by the North Atlantic Council.<sup>1/</sup>

1/ To NATO, tel. 5686, Jan. 13, 1969, Top Secret/Exdis. ✓

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On January 13, 1969, Secretary Rusk instructed Ambassador Cleveland to inform our NATO allies (the Japanese were informed simultaneously) in a restricted session of NAC that in the near future the U.S. may wish to take the next step in opening the question of the limitation and subsequent reduction of strategic armaments.<sup>1/</sup> The step envisaged was that the U.S. and U.S.S.R. might issue an agreed statement of objectives and principles that would serve as a broad framework for more specific talks that would follow. The Secretary stressed that the draft statement had not yet been submitted to the Russians, but that the objectives and principles outlined therein did take into account conversations with the Russians over the past several years.

Ambassador Cleveland carried out these instructions on January 15, 1969, pointing out that the draft statement was submitted in advance to our NATO allies in keeping with prior U.S. commitments to consult in NAC before approaching the Russians on disarmament matters which

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<sup>1/</sup> To NATO, tels. 5684 and 5685, Jan. 18<sup>3</sup>/<sub>3</sub>, 1969, Top Secret/Exdis.

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affected the security of the Alliance. Ambassador Cleveland also advised NAC that one of the U.S. objectives in pursuing a strategic arms limitation agreement was to fulfill the obligations to be undertaken by the U.S. and USSR under Article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Our allies were not asked for their textual concurrence in the draft agreed statement, but were asked for their policy reactions as soon as possible.<sup>1/</sup> It was agreed to hold another restricted NAC session on January 23, 1969, at which these reactions were to be expressed.

1/ From NATO, tel. 170, Jan. 15, 1969, Top Secret/Exdis.

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Classification changed to Secret  
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