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WASHINGTON

Linhard

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Jack Matlock

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BY CW NARA DATE 11/29/09 NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506~~SECRET~~

December 2, 1986

MEMORANDUM FOR JACK MATLOCK

FROM: BOB LINHARD *BL*
SUBJECT: Your Paper, dated 25 November

First of all, let me apologise for taking so long to respond to this. All I can say is that it is a serious subject, your memorandum troubled me a bit, and it has taken me a bit of time to resolve in my own mind how best to help in the process through my response to you.

I have returned your package (next under) annotated to indicate the changes that I would recommend that you make.

I think that the letter to Gorbachev is about right, but that we may wish to wait until next week to allow the currently ongoing discussions in Geneva to be completed. We could then fold into the letter any developments and send it.

I also agree that it is premature to look at fundamental changes in our position right now. Now we need to quietly consolidate what we have and look to refinements over the next month which we can surface during the next negotiating round. In the process of doing this, we could have the ACSG very quietly vet the four alternatives included in the Shultz letter in an appropriately compartmented channel. In addition, we can use this same drill to get back to basics on where we are, where are priorities are, and where our priorities should be over the next 3-6 months in the negotiations. I have some additional thoughts on this which I will outline shortly.

My main problem is with the idea of a "dramatic new proposal" which focuses us on a plan for the total elimination of nuclear weapons. I think that this would be very damaging at this time, especially since we have just put the flap over "zero nuclear weapons" in the context of Reykjavik behind us. This certainly would make news -- but it is clearly not the basis of any arms control agreement, and therefore would be immediately recognized as either propaganda or posturing by the US. It is not on the main line of the recent evolution of our policy and not in synch with the Reagan-Thatcher priorities. I believe it would: further exacerbate our allies (especially Thatcher); be difficult to get the US arms control community to work seriously (especially the Joint Chiefs); and, divert us from needed evolution on the main line of our policy. I really think that this is not the thing to do right now. It is for that reason that I would delete it from the package.

As to the issue of what we should do, I think that we need to be firm in our defense of the President's proposal of "0 ballistic missiles" but cast it as the price that we put on a US acceptance of the Soviet demand for a 10-year commitment not to withdraw from the ABM Treaty. We still need to consolidate

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support for the validity of the President's making this proposal at Reykjavik both with certain quarters in the Administration and with Allies. The idea will give us a lot of needed leverage later when we face the problem of dealing with the huge Soviet advantage in SRINF/SNF ballistic missiles -- but to do so, we need to make it real now.

At the same time, we need to make it clear that our preferred priorities involve significant reductions in START and INF without any unnecessary linkage to the Defense and Space area. Let the Soviets come to us as demandeurs in the D&S area. They will -- since the SDI program is continuing each day and time is working for us on this score. In short, we need to reinforce that the US position (which does not walk away from the US Defense and Space counter-proposal made at Reykjavik) is consistent with long-standing US and NATO arms control strategy and the recent Reagan-Thatcher priorities.

With respect to refinements, I strongly believe that we should not look at any further steps (with respect to one exception) that carry us below the Reykjavik position in terms of force levels. A 50% reduction in strategic forces (1600/6000, with the right to adjust forces from ballistics to slow-flyers as needed) and an appropriate LRINF agreement are realistic and achievable goals which can be supported by our military and allies. The one exception that needs more work is the issue of SRINF/SNF missiles. We will work on that one in the next few weeks.

Jack, I wanted to get this to you soonest today. I can understand if you can't agree with the fixes that I have suggested. Against that contingency, I will provide by about 3pm today two paragraphs for your use: one that expresses my non-concurrence with the Tab III material and one that makes the points in the paragraph just above about "further refinements." I had hoped to have these with this memo, but I got diverted once again.

Give me a call once you have digested this and let's see how I can help you.