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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
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MINUTES

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING

Date:	Saturday, September 14, 1974
Time:	10:08 a.m. to 12 noon
Place:	Cabinet Room, The White House
Subject:	SALT

Principals

The President
Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger
Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger
Director of Arms Control and Disarmament Agency Fred Ikle
Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. George S. Brown
Director of Central Intelligence William Colby

Other Attendees:

State:	Deputy Secretary Robert Ingersoll Ambassador U. Alexis Johnson, U.S. Representative, SALT
Defense:	Deputy Secretary William Clements
CIA:	Carl Duckett
White House:	Gen. Alexander M. Haig Lt. Gen. Brent Scowcroft
NSC:	Jan M. Lodal

President Ford: Thank you all for coming; it's such a nice Saturday morning outside. It's been a very busy week, and this was the only day we could work in the meeting. I see you survived well yesterday, Bill (to Mr. Colby -- referring to his public appearance on covert operations).

Mr. Colby: Just barely -- sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me!

President Ford: I'm glad to see someone else feels that way. I have scheduled a press conference for next Monday night, probably on live TV. I'm glad someone else has laid the groundwork for me.

Secretary Kissinger: Bill faced a group of NSC trained questioners.

Mr. Colby: Kissinger trained! (laughter)

President Ford: (to Ambassador Johnson) Alex, it's nice to see you here before you take off on this most important mission. I hope we can give you some good guidelines which can contribute to your efforts.

At the outset, I would like to make two points. First, about two weeks ago, we had some problems about discussions in other levels of the government, with the press getting information before we had made announcements. Since then, I think we have done better. I hope the attitude is one of keeping things to ourselves until announcements are made. I do think things are getting better, but our critics will not be letting us off easy.

Second, I'd like to give you my overall attitudes on SALT. I think SALT is good for the country. We have the obligation of finding common ground for a proper agreement. It's better to go in with this attitude than to go through on cynical or skeptical grounds, saying we want an agreement, but making it so hard that it won't work. Not just any agreement is acceptable -- the terms might not be acceptable. But reaching an agreement is in our best interests. We should proceed on the basis that this is the case.

Bill, perhaps you would like to start by giving us some background. Let me add that we need not reach any final decisions today -- The purpose of this meeting is to get clarification on our broad principles. We will talk again at a later date about specifics. We can then give instructions to Alex, Henry, and myself (sic) concerning what we ought to have in a proposal.

Mr. Colby: The current Soviet programs for development of intercontinental attack weapons are unprecedented in scope. Four new ICBMs are being tested, three with MIRVs. Additional ICBMs and submarine launched ballistic missiles, perhaps with MIRVs, are in early stages of development. This effort, together with recent Soviet negotiating approaches, strongly suggests that Moscow is determined to proceed with a major modernization of its strategic attack forces, particularly ICBMs.

This chart shows the three current and four new Soviet ICBMs. The SS-X-16, as you will recall, is the small, solid propellant missile which will replace the SS-13. We continue to believe that the Soviets are developing a mobile version of this missile. The 17 and the 19 are the two successors to the SS-11, the most widely deployed Soviet system, but they have at least double the 11's throw weight. The 18 is the replacement for the large SS-9.

All the new systems represent improvements in terms of accuracy, flexibility, and survivability. Moreover, the 17 and 18 are being tested with MIRVs. The next chart shows that the Soviets are still firing most of their new ICBMs at a rapid pace. Experience indicates that Soviet test procedures require about 20 successful launches before an ICBM is ready for deployment. All of the new ICBMs are nearing that figure, and we believe that some version of each will be ready for deployment in the next six months.

President Ford: Their MIRV missiles also?

Mr. Colby: Yes.

As the test program for these new missiles nears completion, the Soviets are preparing silos for their deployment. This photograph shows the massive new segments that are installed after removing major parts of an old SS-11 silo, to prepare it for the 19 missile system. We call this silo conversion, and it takes about a year.

Secretary Kissinger: Mr. President, I might point out that they are not permitted to build new silos under the Interim Agreement.

President Ford: But this modification is permissible?

Mr. Colby: Yes, they have to use the same hole but can modify it.

President Ford: Isn't there a size limitation?

Mr. Colby: Yes, 15 percent.

President Ford: This is a limitation?

Mr. Duckett: Yes --

Secretary Schlesinger:

President Ford:

Mr. Duckett:

Secretary Kissinger: I might point out that the fact that they have to modify the silos creates something of an advantage for us. This permits us to tell which ones have MIRVs. Without the modifications, we were worried that they could pop a new missile in the 11 holes, giving us no way to tell which have new missiles. This is the reason we have confidence we could verify the MIRV agreements we had proposed -- we were convinced they can't deploy the new missiles without modifying silos.

Mr. Duckett:

Secretary Kissinger: Yes. By way of background, Mr. President, you might be interested in knowing what happened in 1972. Brezhnev first said they wanted the agreement to permit no modifications to the silos. The next day, Gromyko had to sheepishly withdraw this and insist on permitting a 15 percent increase.

Secretary Schlesinger: These new missiles will have three or four times the throw weight of the ones they are replacing. Thus, while the modifications may be an intelligence advantage, they are a strategic disadvantage.

Mr. Colby: In monitoring the expected deployment, the fact that the silos for each type of new system have unique configurations will help us.

This newly acquired photograph shows silo components for the 17 at one complex. This is the first evidence of conversion for this system in the field.

Mr. Duckett: .....

Mr. Colby: There are indications that a grand total of 601 SS-11 silos will be converted. There is also silo conversion activity at SS-9 complexes, to prepare for deployment of the 18. If the Soviets go this route for the whole SS-9 force, about 300 more silos would be involved. There is also a program to modernize certain SS-11 silos for a newer version of the missile. There are indications that 420 SS-11 silos will be modernized. The SS-11, you will recall, does not carry MIRVs.

Thus, on the basis of these and other developments, there appears to be a Soviet potential for about 1,000 MIRVed missiles (including some submarine launched) by around 1980. This total is close to the SALT limits for 1980 which the Soviets proposed last March.

To explore future possibilities, let me assume two situations, some results of which we can see on the charts I will show. The first situation assumes that the Soviets will intensify their weapons development programs, anticipating that the Interim Agreement will lapse in 1977. In this projection we assume that they would pursue all attractive options, successfully push the limits of technology, and deploy at sustained rates similar to the highest annual rate demonstrated in the past. The second situation assumes that the launcher limits for the Interim Agreement will be adhered to for the indefinite future. It also incorporates our "best estimate" of what the Soviets are likely to do on ICBM modernization and conversion programs, and a MIRV program for ballistic missile submarines. It attempts to reflect the Soviets' plan to upgrade their force and may be compared with current US programmed forces shown on the chart.

In the first situation, we project an increase in heavy ICBM deployment, a large mobile missile force, and a ballistic missile submarine force larger than allowed by the Interim Agreement. Under these conditions, US forces would presumably also go up. On the other hand, the "best estimate" is constrained by the levels of the Interim Agreement, and envisions a slower rate of deployment and technical achievement. A new heavy bomber is projected in the first case but is not included in our "best projection". Neither force includes the Backfire -- the new Soviet swing-wing bomber intended primarily for operations in Europe and Asia, but with a potential for attacking the US. If the Backfire were included, it could add -- in our "best estimate" -- as many as 250 delivery vehicles to the 1985 total.

President Ford: How much of a jump would that be?

Mr. Colby: It would just be a little jump in the curves.

President Ford: It would be a comparable jump in both curves?

Mr. Duckett: Yes -- The fourth one has heavy bombers, but not Backfire.

Mr. Colby: The next chart, of on-line missile reentry vehicles, both ICBMs and SLBMs, shows that even though the number of Soviet missiles is constrained by the Interim Agreement, the total number of reentry vehicles deployed is likely to surpass the programmed number of US missile RVs by 1980.

President Ford: May I look at that again? They catch up with no more missiles?

Mr. Colby: Yes. The reason for the current disparity is MIRVs, which they deploy.

Secretary Kissinger: These charts contain no bombers?

Mr. Colby: That's correct -- they're missiles only.

President Ford: But they include the submarines?

Mr. Colby: Yes.

Secretary Schlesinger: Mr. President, I should point out that on this chart, the Soviet MIRVs are approximately one megaton each, whereas the bulk of ours are much smaller, [redacted] We deployed a large number of small warheads in order to represent no hard target threat to the Soviets. Theirs will be a hard target threat to us.

Mr. Duckett: Perhaps another way of saying that is that they have less need for accuracy with one megaton weapons.

Mr. Colby: The next chart shows the number of weapons with bombers added.

President Ford: Does this one include Backfire?

Mr. Colby: The next chart adds in the weapons carried by bombers. Because of the US superiority in bombers, the total number of weapons in the US programmed force remains above our best estimate of the Soviet force for well past 1980. The Soviets consider bombers important to the strategic balance, however, and have nearly 10,000 surface-to-air missile launchers to employ against them.

Mr. President, we should now address the question of how the Soviets view the quantitative relationship of the strategic forces, now and in the future. This chart illustrates our view of how they might expect this balance to appear in 1974, 1980, and 1985. The chart shows how the present modernization and MIRV program expands the number of weapons -- warheads and bombs -- in spite of a relatively stable number of delivery vehicles --ICBMs, SLBMs, and heavy bombers. The Western forces include the bombers and missiles of our European allies, as well as US forward based aircraft -- all of which the Soviets believe must be considered. They have also indicated that they include a threat from China (which we have not shown) along with the Western threat.

The chart also shows Soviet medium bombers, MRBMs, and IRBMs in dashed lines. While the Soviets resist inclusion of these forces in SALT negotiations, we know that they consider them in their own evaluation of the overall strategic balance. We believe that the comparative number of weapons is an important strategic measure to the Soviets. They now have fewer weapons than the US, but lead in throw weight and megatonnage. Looked at from this point of view, the Soviets can tell themselves that their new programs are designed to narrow the gap in an area where the present balance favors the US.

Ultimately, military power depends on how effectively it can be used to deter, influence, or wage war. Evaluating total strategic force is a complex matter.

President Ford: These charts presume we do not change our throw weight?

Mr. Duckett: We have just shown the programmed forces and not tried to guess what we might do. We think they may assume that our throw weight will be increased.

Secretary Kissinger: In our discussions with them they don't discuss throw weight; they have emphasized the number of reentry vehicles. It is perhaps likely that their focus on the number of reentry vehicles which can be put on missiles may be because of their throw weight advantage, but they profess that RVs, and not throw weight, concern them.

Mr. Colby: We have not tried to estimate their estimate of us -- we have shown only the US program.

Secretary Schlesinger: Our budget has in it R&D for a larger missile, either for replacement in our present silos, or, if we needed to, we could change the basing. They know we have this program. But I should

point out that increases in throw weight and RVs are bad for both sides. One of our main objectives is to preserve the present crisis stability by avoiding an explosion in RVs and throw weight.

Deputy Secretary Clements: Also, through our R&D we can do a lot -- we are planning to double the throw weight on Minuteman III.

President Ford: If we make the decision to deploy.

Deputy Secretary Clements: Yes, and hopefully to double the accuracy.

President Ford: Within the 15 percent limit?

Secretary Kissinger: You're saying that the existing missile will have more throw weight?

Secretary Schlesinger: No -- That we will double the yield, not the throw weight.

Deputy Secretary Clements: I was trying to use the simplest of terms -- it's the yield that matters, that's what you use the throw weight for. And we plan to double the yield and the accuracy.

Secretary Kissinger: In addition, you are developing a larger missile -- there are two separate things at work here.

President Ford: And when you increase the size, you obviously will increase the yield.

Deputy Secretary Clements: Yes, and we will increase the yield on the Minuteman III through improved miniaturization.

Secretary Kissinger: By applying our technology, on a bigger missile we can get either many more RVs, or higher yields.

Dr. Ikle: The Soviets can also within their existing silos build missiles of greater throw weight.

Deputy Secretary Clements: There is a technology gap in our favor. It's only a guess, but I would say it's 8-10 years. They couldn't do now what we can do.

President Ford: What about the testing limitations -- Are we precluded from any of this?

Secretary Schlesinger: No sir -- Our estimate is we will have this ready by May 1, 1976.

President Ford: That is within the threshold agreement?

Secretary Schlesinger: Yes.

President Ford: If they are behind in technology, aren't they precluded from doing this by the threshold agreement?

Secretary Schlesinger: In addition to yield-to-weight ratio, we are improving accuracy, which they can do also. There will be some constraints on high yield weapons, but we estimate that we have no advantage in high yield weapons, but only in lower yield weapons.

Mr. Duckett: This chart shows what they could do with an accelerated program. The throw weight goes off the scale, and the megatonnage would match this slope.

Secretary Schlesinger: Bomber payload and missile throw weight are not completely comparable. That chart shows bomber loadings, but we have to remember they have 10,000 SAMs. This means that bomber penetration is degraded.

Mr. Colby: I would like to mention two aspects of this problem -- the survivability of ICBM forces, and the number of fatalities a nuclear exchange could produce. The first of these will be significantly influenced by force developments on both sides.

This chart shows hypothetical US and Soviet views of the survivability of their fixed ICBM force from 1974 through 1985. Any such calculation is subject to a number of uncertainties, only one of which is illustrated. Two methods of targeting -- one weapon per silo, and a multiple allocation of up to three weapons per target -- are shown because of considerable uncertainty regarding the number of RVs that could be allocated with confidence to a target. The US Minuteman Force is assumed to be upgraded to 1,000 Minuteman III missiles, with improved guidance and yield.

The projected qualitative improvement in the Soviet ICBM force in our current best estimate causes the number of Minuteman survivors to decrease rapidly by the 80s. Soviet ICBM survivors will increase through the 70s, as the new harder Soviet silos become operational, but could decrease if the US deploys the improved version of the Minuteman III.

General Brown: This depends somewhat on targeting. In our operational plans, we don't know how to do the targeting well enough to get that many weapons on each silo, and we think we're as good as they are at targeting. In other words, our war games don't come out quite so pessimistic.

President Ford: The targeting problem affects both sides?

Mr. Colby: Yes.

Mr. Duckett: There's an interesting sidelight concerning the new silos. .....

President Ford: How do we do it?

Deputy Secretary Clements: Well, our method is no better -- the hole ends up the same depth! (laughter) It's not a damn bit better.

Mr. Duckett: I understand some recent work by the Defense Science Board indicates that only two rather than three weapons can be put on each silo, so this chart might be a little misleading.

Mr. Colby: The other charts show that even with this survivability problem, ...

President Ford: With the forces that are left?

Mr. Colby: Yes. In addition, they could do enormous industrial damage.

Secretary Schlesinger: That assumes they don't relocate their population. They could reduce their population fatalities dramatically by relocating their population out of the cities, although we could continue to destroy their industrial floor space.

Dr. Ikle: Their people would still be subject to fallout.

Secretary Schlesinger: Yes, they would have to contain the fallout.

General Brown: We do our computations looking at the long-term effects. You might remember on your trip to Omaha, Mr. President, that we

target for 70 percent damage on the industrial floor space, and, of course, this gets much of the population.

President Ford: Is there any evidence of their planning for relocation?

Secretary Schlesinger: Yes -- they have an extensive civil defense program. We don't know how well trained their population is, but they have a big program.

Mr. Duckett: In this respect, we see no facilities to handle this population once they're outside the city -- they seem to have no food supplies, and so forth.

President Ford: Well all I can say is, that I hope their effort works out better than our aborted effort has in this respect.

Mr. Colby: The conclusion of all this is that the basis of a mutually deterrent strategic balance is likely to remain essentially intact. But many specific features of the forces of both sides will change. Uncertainties about the quality and operational practices of these forces will become more important to the assessment of the strategic balance than simple quantitative measures, like numbers of launchers and warheads.

These, Mr. President, are some of the basic elements of the strategic relationship we see ahead. I would now like to consider that relationship within the broader context of how the Soviets view the total Soviet-American relationship, as this will be the framework in which they approach the forthcoming SALT negotiations. Marxism-Leninism still provides the Soviet leaders with a set of ready-made prejudices, but their appraisals of the outside world are increasingly pragmatic. Both from what they say, and how they behave, the Soviets clearly regard the US as a potent competitor.

In economic terms, they have great respect for our economic strength, and have not concluded that US problems are gravely debilitating. They are particularly conscious of our lead in the technological field. Their military concerns, in turn, stem chiefly from the technological gap. Consequently, and despite all their own gains, the Soviets do not feel they have achieved a guaranteed strategic equality with the US. They tend to over-insure, and they want to catch up in areas where they are behind -- like MIRVs -- as well as prevent any erosion in their relative position.

In the world arena, the Soviets believe that their military buildup of the last decade is the primary factor that has forced Washington to turn from

cold war to detente. Although they believe the relative position of the US has declined, they still take a sober view of the magnitude and scope of US influence. They expect, however, so long as detente is maintained, to be able to advance their interests. Moreover, they still seem convinced they can maintain detente while pursuing vigorous military programs.

These perceptions have a number of implications for SALT. First, much as the Russians might want the image of strategic superiority for its political value, they doubt that the US will allow them to gain an overall strategic lead in the next ten years. (In fact, they may see a chance that we will pull ahead in some areas.) Their hope is for an opportunity to forge ahead in the longer run. Second, the Soviets see much to be done in other areas -- economic, technological, political. Detente is their current strategy creating the most favorable atmosphere for making progress in these areas.

Brezhnev himself probably wants some kind of deal on SALT, but he has proven a hard bargainer, and cannot act independently of his Politburo colleagues. Both he and they are heavily dependent on the military to formulate their views of the present and future strategic relationship. The Soviet military almost monopolize both the data and the expertise in this area, and is inclined to present "worst case" analyses of US strengths.

President Ford: Worse case from their point of view?

Mr. Colby: Yes. Finally, the Soviet leadership as a group is aging. Their successors will probably want to preserve detente. But their in-fighting could make it harder to take specific decisions in the sensitive area of arms control.

In the meantime, Mr. President, the Soviets see no promising alternative to detente as a way of meeting their problems. If they came to think detente was in genuine danger, they would want to try to shore it up. As they approach a new US President, they will be anxious to learn -- and to influence -- your concept of the relationship. In particular, they will want to assess your terms for a strategic arms agreement, whether you are prepared to offer significant limits on US programs, and how you might react to a failure to reach agreement.

President Ford: Thanks very much, Bill. Could I look at the economic comparison chart once again -- I was listening to you talk.

Mr. Colby: Yes. This chart is taken from open Soviet publications, and we think it is an accurate picture of their view.

President Ford: They are 85 percent as good in agriculture?

Secretary Schlesinger: Yes, that's in grain output only.

Mr. Colby: With about 30 percent of their population compared to a much smaller percentage for ours. Their productivity is much worse.

Deputy Secretary Clements: This would also be much changed if you included the whole Western world rather than just the US versus the Soviets.

President Ford: Even if you included the Bloc countries?

Mr. Colby: Yes -- The Bloc countries add very little.

Deputy Secretary Ingersoll: Also, their per capita income figures are not on the same qualitative basis. These figures don't recognize the qualitative difference.

Dr. Ikle: These are from their public sources.

President Ford: You said these are not public?

Mr. Colby: No. They are public. We have reasonable confidence they are accurate. Of course, in the military area, they close off all information entirely.

President Ford: Thank you, Bill. Henry, now why don't you give us your ideas on where we should go in this meeting and what we should do to prepare for Alex's return.

Secretary Kissinger: Mr. President, I would like to first review the status of our SALT preparations. Then I will go over the general strategy we might follow in the upcoming talks. All of this has been reviewed by the Working Group of the Verification Panel and the Verification Panel itself. First, to pick up on Bill's point. There is no question but that detente serves some Soviet purposes -- they wouldn't be in it otherwise. However, the question we have to ask ourselves is, what American purposes are served by detente. We should remember that from 1969 through 1971, we refused to offer them any significant trade or other concessions until the Soviets had moderated some of their foreign policy conduct. The SALT negotiations accelerated right when we were in the middle of the Vietnam war, and there was serious question about our ability to maintain

our programs. In 1971, the Defense budgets were being cut everywhere. Thus, the situation has to be seen in the context of what we could have sustained otherwise.

We need not be driven by previous considerations; I'm speaking of the past and that is subject to change. But there are a number of considerations that apply to our current situation.

First, it is easy to talk about superiority, but this is one of those concepts which is peculiarly difficult to translate into strategic and military usefulness. There might be some political effect associated with the perception of superiority, but the level of fatalities involved makes the deliberate decision to initiate general strategic nuclear war perhaps the most difficult decision any leader can make. Thus, when we consider investments in strategic forces, we have to consider their usefulness, and whether it is better to put our efforts into more strategic forces or into tactical forces.

Second, as Bill's charts show, with the multiplication of weapons and the explosion of technology, after the next rounds of arms deployments are completed, both sides will still be essentially in strategic equilibrium. If both sides can realize this, perhaps we can at least slow the buildup or arrest it, or perhaps turn it around.

Third, over an indefinite period, an unconstrained strategic arms race is not compatible with a political relaxation of tensions. If we were to sustain an arms race, we have to demonstrate an overwhelming Soviet threat. It would be hard to sustain trade and other relations in this environment. It is obvious that the US cannot fall behind. If Soviet forces increase, that is what we will have to do. But the political dimensions will also change. In the past, we have attempted to get an equitable agreement to avoid this situation. A relationship can continue to be constructed if we can get an equitable agreement, leaving behind the question of what is an equitable agreement.

Turning now to our objectives in SALT, Mr. President, we have had four objectives:

-- First, to break the momentum of the Soviet buildup and set ceilings on the level of forces. We have concentrated on equal aggregates.

-- Second, to control the qualitative arms race, which has been a codeword for MIRVs. For other qualitative improvements, such as

accuracy and yield-to-weight ratios, we have made essentially no efforts. "Qualitative improvements" has been a codeword for MIRVs.

-- Third, to moderate the deployment of new generations of weapons.

-- And fourth, to turn down the arms race with reductions. Of course, reductions require the interim negotiation of an upper ceiling. For example, if we agreed on a level of 2,000 by 1985 but no interim ceiling, the Soviets could continue building up to, for example, 2800 by 1984 and tell you that they would take all the reductions in the last year. Thus, we need some kind of ceiling, but this could be expressed in many ways.

SALT I was a step in meeting our first objective, numerical ceilings. SALT I dealt with numbers in a situation where we had no programs to increase numbers. The JCS, both as a group and individuals, did not want new submarine programs; they wanted to concentrate on Trident. Thus, there was no possibility of an increase in land-based missiles, and no interest in an increase in sea-based missiles, and bombers were not constrained by the agreement. It is open to some argument whether we stopped the Soviet program or just did to them what we did to ourselves and froze their existing program. At any rate, there were no constraints on US programs growing out of the agreement. One could make a reasonable argument that the agreement was used to accelerate US programs -- that Trident, accuracy, and other programs would not have been funded without the SALT I agreements.

But as Bill Colby's charts show, the Interim Agreement becomes obsolete in 1977. Before then the Soviets will put new launchers in old holes, but without the Interim Agreement we could see an increase in numbers. It is less costly to dig new holes than to modify the old ones. When this is considered, seeing the Soviets program to modify silos, it is clear that the Interim Agreement constrained numbers significantly.

Dr. Ikle: It cost more or less the same to modify the silos or build new ones.

Secretary Schlesinger: If we had to enlarge the holes, we would have to remodel concrete.

Deputy Secretary Clements: But we have sufficient volume or "cube" in our holes so that our technology permits large increase in missile size in the same holes.

Secretary Kissinger: We do not have to dig new holes to increase our capability.

Deputy Secretary Clements: Isn't that right, George?

General Brown: Yes.

Secretary Kissinger: Without an Interim Agreement, we could be talking about quite substantial numbers.

Turning to the present situation, SALT is stalemated. In Geneva, both sides have presented positions which reinforce the perception of the other that they are trying for unilateral advantage. I think we have been more responsible than they have, but our proposals have primarily constrained their programs. Of course their proposals constrain us but do not constrain their own programs.

In Geneva, we have focused on equal aggregates and equal throw weight. We have made essentially no progress with this approach.

In March, during my conversations with Brezhnev, the Soviets proposed a different approach -- a continuation of the Interim Agreement numbers for a three-year period, while giving us an 1100 to 1000 advantage in numbers of MIRV missiles. But this would have constrained our Trident program -- we would have been able to deploy it only by replacing Poseidon and Polaris. At the same time, it constrained essentially nothing on their side.

President Ford: What would have been the impact on the B-1 program?

Secretary Kissinger: None. Under the Interim Agreement, both sides can increase the number of bombers. We can also put missiles on airplanes, something they are concerned about. That's why I have been asking the DOD to do this, to demonstrate a capability.

President Ford: Do we have any affirmative program for this?

General Brown: We have one -- the air-launched cruise missile program.

Secretary Schlesinger: We are also going to demonstrate, first over the desert and then over the ocean, the capability to launch a missile from a C-5. But we have no full-fledged program -- this is just a demonstration to show the Soviets we can do it.

President Ford: Will they know in advance about it?

Ambassador Johnson: It has already been in the press.

Secretary Kissinger: They seem to be worried about this capability. In all their propositions, they have suggested limits on air-to-surface missiles.

In any event, their proposal in March was unacceptable and this led to a deadlock. At the Summit this year, President Nixon proposed a shorter two-year extension of the Interim Agreement to 1979, to fit in better with our Trident program, to be coupled with MIRV limits of 1100 launchers and 700 for them.

President Ford: And they stuck with 1100 to 1000?

Secretary Kissinger: Yes. But even our proposal would have required them to retire very little. The Soviets seem to be considering it seriously. They had two Politburo meetings, and at the airport in one meeting, Brezhnev asked me to explain it to Ustinov, the head of their defense industries. But they had two generals there, and every time I said something, they jumped up showing Brezhnev charts with how much harm it would do -- they probably wanted to change the squadron size! (laughter)

Mr. President, in MBFR, I don't want to get into the details, but we are thinking of giving up some squadrons, but George keeps changing the squadron size -- pretty soon he will only have two airplanes per squadron! (laughter)

President Ford: He just wants more generals!

Secretary Kissinger: At any rate, we were trying what we thought was a fair proposal, but they finally refused it. And then we proposed a new agreement on a 10-year basis. There are several advantages to this:

-- First, any five-year proposal cuts into both sides' programs, or simply ratifies what both sides are doing anyway. It also cuts off our programs, when the other side could easily break out. There are many uncertainties in a five-year period. Even if they would limit MIRVs to 750, they might be below the number at the end of the period, but then could really take off with their programs in 1979 or 1980. The same is true for us. The full impact of our Trident and B-1 programs will not be felt until 1980 and later. Therefore, we thought that if we could go to a 1985 approach, we could constrain or stretch out programs, and in this atmosphere, we would be less vulnerable to a breakout.

-- Second, Brezhnev kept saying that he needed the appearance of equality, which he doesn't believe they now have, given our lead in weapons. I should point out that for some measures like throw weight, it is our choice that we are behind. They didn't force us to deploy smaller missiles.

Secretary Schlesinger: The reason the US chose small missiles was because we were trying to exercise restraint, so that the Soviets would not perceive any threatening hard target capability. This was Secretary McNamara's explicit decision. He was trying to counter a potential 7000 interceptor ABM, and he did it by fractionating our existing payload. The Soviets are increasing their payload by a factor or at least two as they fractionate.

Secretary Kissinger: But Brezhnev's major point, that with the warhead gap there would not be an appearance of equality, had merit. We have expressed a need for a numerical equality in numbers of weapons through our equal aggregates approach ourselves.

As Bill said, and I have had no prior discussion with him about this, I believe this is an unusually good time to make progress.

President Ford: Have they agreed on the principle of ten years?

Secretary Kissinger: Yes.

It is my impression that their bureaucratic problem is worse than ours. For example, prior to Gromyko's joining the Politburo, he was not permitted at Politburo meetings even to comment on military programs. He was not permitted any research or analytical staff for military matters. All military input and technical data came from the defense department.

Deputy Secretary Clements: That sounds like a great system! (laughter)

Secretary Schlesinger: (to Clements) That cuts you out too, Bill!

Secretary Kissinger: The result of the bureaucratic situation is that historically, every arms control idea has come from the US. Whenever they generate a scheme, they have to stick to it because they have no flexibility. Dobrynin once told me that the general at the Geneva talks has instructions not to agree with Semenov on anything so that it all has to go back to Moscow for decision.

President Ford: So their civilian representative can make no decisions.

Secretary Kissinger: That's right. At the beginning of SALT I, we knew more about Soviet programs than the Soviet civilians on their Delegation.

Ambassador Johnson: One of their military men asked us not to talk so much about their programs, saying that they did not provide this information to their own civilians.

Secretary Kissinger: Even now, Gromyko is so far behind the power curve that he can do little but repeat his briefing papers. He can't say anything on his own. Thus, if we don't break the deadlock, it is inconceivable that they could come up with a new approach.

Bureaucratically, if we do come up with a new idea, we will have to submit it through your channels to Brezhnev directly, so that he can study it before it has been beaten down by his bureaucracy. If it is submitted through Alex in Geneva, it will be beaten down before it has a chance.

All of this, Mr. President, affects the strategy of how we should proceed. Alex should go back and talk principles -- he should convey primarily a mood, not concrete proposals. He can also explore some areas we have not yet explored. Then in early October, after one or two more NSC meetings, we can give our ideas in your channels to Brezhnev. Then I will go to Moscow, and if we can agree on principles, we can feed this back to Geneva, where it will take months, and maybe years, to work out the details of the final agreement.

At today's meeting, we want to put before you some of the problems, although we do not yet have solutions. For example, there is the question of aggregates. If we agree to numbers at the Soviet level, we will have to build up. At lower levels, the Soviets will have to reduce considerably before we do. Or finally, we could try to balance some slight numerical advantage for an advantage in some other measure.

A second problem is attempting to balance the number of RVs on each side. We have a large lead in the number of RVs, but our yield is infinitesimal compared to the Soviets.

Secretary Schlesinger: There is no problem if Henry can obtain MIRV limits on us versus throw weight limits on them. We can reduce the number of reentry vehicles. We could go to three on Poseidon. To the extent they worry about numbers, we can adapt, although I don't believe it is in the Soviets interest to have us do this.

Secretary Kissinger: I'm not saying any particular formulation is the answer, but just what the issues are.

Third, there is the question of the throw weight to numbers area. And, fourth, there is the Soviets' constant reference to overseas based systems. Ideally, we can move this discussion to MBFR -- when you talk to Resor later today, we will have some time to talk about this. But this is not likely to come up in the next month, so Alex need not discuss this in Geneva.

Ambassador Johnson: I agree.

Secretary Kissinger: There is no need to modify our previous positions in Geneva. However, it is important for Alex to indicate some flexibility in the context of a ten-year agreement. Second, he can raise issues we have not dealt with before -- for example, reductions, which we have not seriously talked about. Another area, which is full of complexities and details, concerns the deployment rates of new systems.

President Ford: Deployment rates of new systems?

Secretary Kissinger: Yes. We could either prohibit new systems, but that is tough to monitor. Or we could permit, for example, if we had a limit of 1000 MIRVs over a ten-year period, we could also add a limit on construction of less than 100 a year.

Mr. Duckett: I should point out, Mr. President, that at the peak of the deployments of their SS-9s and SS-11s, they were digging 265 holes a year. This would compare to numbers even lower than those Henry mentioned.

Secretary Kissinger: If we could stretch their deployments over a ten-year period, there would be a different strategic significance. Alex could discuss this in general, although we don't have a final position on it.

In the Verification Panel, we are trying to put together various numerical schemes. Perhaps within the next two weeks, we can present them to you here.

President Ford: And then we would submit them in my channels to Brezhnev.

Secretary Kissinger: Yes, Even after you approve a particular approach, we have several ways of handling it. We could give them one scheme, or perhaps two or three of different levels of complexity. It makes no sense to give them three schemes of the same complexity and let them choose, but for example, we could give them one very crude approach, with numbers only, and others more complex.

In the next day or two, we will give you the various instructions received from the agencies for your choice, and then we can give instructions to Alex for his talks which begin on Wednesday.

President Ford: Then these instructions will follow the overall pattern of more flexibility?

Secretary Kissinger: Yes -- perhaps not so much flexibility, but a better tone. He can also open up these new areas. On the aggregates, I see little he can do other than repeat our past statements.

Ambassador Johnson: The key is how forcefully I repeat our past requirements for equal aggregates. If I don't repeat this, it will be seen as significant. If I do repeat it, they may just say this is the same old stuff.

President Ford: But if the past pattern remains true, they won't have any new ideas either.

Secretary Kissinger: I am certain they will have no new proposal. It's possible they will present their old proposal in a more flexible manner, but if they had a new proposal they would submit it directly to you, not to Alex through Semenov. But Brezhnev has no system to develop new proposals, unless it is in reaction to a proposal of ours.

President Ford: Their military is so dominant, that they are completely inflexible without pressure from Brezhnev.

Secretary Kissinger: Finally, they will come down on one approach, and they won't care what the analysis is. For example, they gave us some numbers in Moscow, which if you counted all aircraft carriers on station and all F-111s in the world with maximum loadings, you could work out a scheme with those numbers, but they had no flexibility.

President Ford: Our approach will have to be predicated on that assumption?

Secretary Kissinger: Yes. Grechko is a very able guy, but he doesn't think in SALT terms. If we come in with a proposal, Brezhnev can do something more which might go beyond just satisfying their bureaucracy.

President Ford: Jim, do you have any comments?

Secretary Schlesinger: Mr. President, I have a presentation which gives the details of the force balance. I could give this now or later as you prefer. Also I have some observations. There are two main objectives

of arms control -- to improve the crisis stability of the situation, and to improve the arms balance. To improve crisis stability, we prefer to hold down the size of the forces. As we add to destructive capability, with a constant number of aim points on each side, there could be a growing temptation to strike first.

On the other hand, when talking to the arms balance, we are talking about what is perceived as a relation of the two sides. At present, their force is not greater than ours. But I think Alex should stress the functional relationship between their force deployments and ours. What they decide to deploy affects our deployments. In effect, they are choosing our deployments.

Because of some of the factors Henry has described, I don't think they understand this. The Soviet military perceive that they can unilaterally adjust their forces, thus I think it is worthwhile for Alex to stress this relationship.

President Ford: What you are saying is true, but among ourselves in this room, we have to recognize that we have a problem they don't have. We have to sell our programs to the Congress. We should recognize this among ourselves, although I don't think Alex should say this to them in Geneva (laughter) -- but as a practical matter, this is what we face.

Secretary Schlesinger: But the Soviets' perception is that the US can move fast when the climate is right. In 1958, when they launched Sputnik we reacted and had a man on the moon in ten years. In 1961, shortly after we perceived a missile gap, we were putting Minutemen out at the rate of one every two days. They believe that if they ever arouse American concerns, we can respond, and that it is not in their interest to do so.

I might now show you just a few charts.

(Referring to models of an SS-9 and a Minuteman III) This is their SS-9 missile. It carries a 20 to 25 megaton weapon. By comparison our Minuteman is much smaller. Their follow-on missile, the SS-18, is about the same size as the SS-9. Each one has eight times the payload capacity of a Minuteman.

President Ford: Just to clarify this, as you go to higher yields, as you mentioned Bill (Clements), doesn't this make a difference?

Secretary Schlesinger: It depends on the size and the yield-weight ratios. In the long run, with this size, we can't retain our technological advantages in yield-to-weight ratios. We may retain our advantages in accuracy, but as Soviet accuracies improve, this gets less important.

President Ford: Bill, how does the eight-to-one ratio change -- it must if you double the yield.

Secretary Schlesinger: The ratio doesn't change -- our yield, pound for pound, is better.

Deputy Secretary Clements: When we double the yield, the dimensions don't change. But in any event, accuracy is more important than yield. The capability of the little ones grows enormously with accuracy. If technology stays the same, which it probably will do over the next ten years, we will have this advantage.

President Ford: And the impact on the targeting will be the same if we can get the accuracy?

Secretary Schlesinger: No -- no one in the real world will know accuracy precisely. We will know about different degrees of accuracy, but never know precisely what our accuracy is. Throw weight can compensate for accuracy, as is shown in this chart. This shows the impact of uncertain inaccuracy. .....

Secretary Kissinger: .....

Secretary Schlesinger: .....

Secretary Kissinger: .....

Secretary Schlesinger: There would be some downward adjustment in this curve, yes.

Ambassador Johnson: Of course, accuracy is important only in a counter-force role, not for soft targets.

Secretary Schlesinger: Accuracy is important for any selective targeting. For cities, it matters not at all.

President Ford: How would we verify them on other aircraft?

Secretary Kissinger: The verification of ALCMs is in any event mind boggling. If you say they count only if they are hanging on the aircraft, they can avoid the limit by not hanging them. If you apply the MIRV ground rules, any type of aircraft seen carrying them would have to count. We would verify by never flying them on tankers.

President Ford: Can you verify 1500 versus 3000 kilometers?

Mr. Colby: .....

Mr. Duckett: .....

General Brown: Of course, we'll tell them through our publications.

President Ford: That would permit us to verify if they were under 3000 kilometers within the limit. Do we have any information as to their development program?

Mr. Duckett: .....

President Ford: .....

Mr. Duckett: .....

Mr. Colby: They have an extensive program, but not the same kind as ours.

Mr. Duckett: Right. They have a lot more experience than we have, but of a different type.

Secretary Kissinger: They had long-range cruise missiles, but abandoned them when they went to ballistic missiles.

Mr. Duckett: In the early sixties, they had two programs, which they cancelled when we cancelled ours.

In 1972, by fractionating to very small RVs, we could deploy a large number of RVs. But if they support their throw weight, ultimately, they could outclass the US. We could react in two ways. First, we could expand, increasing our forces, but this would also increase instabilities. Second, what we would prefer to do, is to hold down each side.

This is why I think Alex should stress the functional relationship between their choices and our responses.

President Ford: Alex should tell them that instead of being guided by an inflexible military, they should be guided by their knowledge of the opposite situation on our side.

Secretary Schlesinger: Henry is in a better position than I am to judge if that is the proper message, but we can be educated. The US must convey the US intent to match them.

Secretary Kissinger: Many of these inequalities are not the result of the Interim Agreement. They existed before the agreement and would have existed regardless of the agreement. All our ongoing missile programs are permitted by the agreement -- we could increase our throw weight if we desire.

Mr. President, we have to look at what we can realistically do. It is not a bad message to give them, that their deployment rate affects ours. To do this, I hope our Defense shows the maximum number of new developments, but if we are realistic, we have to realize that they have four new programs, which represent a major investment in resources. They cannot give up their approach. In any ten-year program, maybe they could give up one, but the 17 and 19 will survive, and the 18 too in one form or another. The question is what price we want to pay to have a single warhead instead of MIRVs, and from some of the things I have heard recently, I am not convinced it is all that much in our interest to pay much of a price for that. But if we can stretch out their missile deployments over an 8-year period, this would help.

We also should have a sense of the time frame in which we are dealing. Throw weight is worrisome if it can be translated into accuracy and yield. Up to now, the most they have tested is eight warheads on their larger missile and six on their smaller. We have to assess what they can do in the time period. If they can modify only about 610 holes, with no more than six warheads each, the advantage of the throw weight will be apparent only in the 80's. The throw weight problem is not upon us now -- when it is upon us we will have to tell you.

Most of the analysis, yield, and accuracy relate to ability against fixed targets. Thus, the percent of your force which is fixed versus mobile is important, and the percent of theirs that is fixed is much greater.

We cannot drive them to smaller missiles over the next 10 years. Their system doesn't permit changing the type of their weapons. Perhaps we can change the numbers, but not the types. The question is that at some point both sides will equal out, and where does technological advantage even out.

Secretary Schlesinger: If we can constrain their MIRV, it would help. With seven or eight million pounds of throw weight MIRVed, that puts our Minuteman force at risk. We would have to put missiles on aircraft or take other action, or convince them to slow down their rate of deployment.

Secretary Kissinger: If Alex can make as his first point that they are determining our force through their decisions, this will help.

Ambassador Johnson: If I could also convince them of the desirability of providing some information on what they plan to do, this would reduce our uncertainty.

President Ford: Have they ever done this?

Secretary Kissinger: Not at Alex's level. In March, they told us that they were having trouble with their SLBM MIRVs, and that their SLBM MIRVs would be slower than their ICBMs. I believe this is the first time they have formally told us something like this.

President Ford: Is there any harm in asking them for such information?

Secretary Kissinger: It depends on how Alex does it.

Alex: I would simply state the desirability of having the information not offered as a proposal.

Dr. Ikle: If we could get this point across to their military, by stating that the lack of information is harmful.

Secretary Kissinger: Over the next few months, about the most Alex can hope to do is to get them to understand that an all out deployment by them is not costless. The information idea is OK, but it is not relevant until we have some agreement in principle on doing something about the deployment rates.

President Ford: So Alex will follow this course, of the US being more flexible. If we can then get the right terms in an agreement, we will sign it, even though we are saying that if they pursue their programs, we will have to do something to respond.

Secretary Schlesinger: And if RVs are of major concern to them we are willing to do something about them.

Mr. Colby: Ultimately, we have to get both sides to ask the question of how much is enough.

Secretary Kissinger: We are dealing here in two time frames. First, the major thing Alex can do by the end of October is to emphasize the new approach of the ten-year agreement and that their programs are forcing us into new programs. Jim's suggestion can help. We can convince them that every military program is not a net asset. Second, we can open new areas, for example reductions. Then in early October, we can put some models before them. Alex will know them, although he will not discuss them in Geneva. Then if we can get agreement in principle, Alex will have a real negotiation on his hands.

President Ford: Of course, the credibility of Alex saying that we will match them is related to the actions of Congress on the military budget now before them.

Secretary Schlesinger: Every item in the strategic forces has been approved.

President Ford: We should make this more visible.

Secretary Schlesinger: The House vote was taken on the day of the Soviet parliamentarian's visit here. Ed Hebert, partially to embarass Bella, called for a vote, and it passed 390 to 35.

Deputy Secretary Clements: That is why the cruise missile program is so important. The Soviets are very sensitive to this. Right Henry?

Secretary Kissinger: Right -- I'm chuckling because I have been trying to keep it going.

President Ford: Well gentlemen, this meeting has been very helpful. We will have to put in writing the kind of direction Alex should take. Alex, when do you need this?

Ambassador Johnson: I am leaving Monday morning.

Secretary Kissinger: We can send them to him by cable. We want time to put before you the various proposals made by the agencies.

Ambassador Johnson: I have to be walking something of a tight rope throughout these talks.

President Ford: Like walking across Niagara Falls! George do you have any comments?

General Brown: I would only remind us that many of their deployment programs start now, while ours come later. We could get ourself in a box, and jeopardize our B-1 and Trident.

Ambassador Johnson: But you would have no objection to my saying that their deployment rates are higher than we like.

Deputy Secretary Clements: They should know this.

Secretary Schlesinger: We should stress our flexibility. We do not have to start our new programs and increase our budget which can be adjusted to their programs. We are prepared to sacrifice large throw weight missiles. There is no need to deploy them, but we will maintain the balance.

President Ford: Fred, do you have any comment?

Dr. Ikle: Only that I think we do face a major opportunity.

President Ford: Well thank you gentlemen, and good luck Alex. With you there, I have confidence that the negotiations are in good hands.