

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

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THE WHITE HOUSE

PRESS CONFERENCE  
OF  
FRED IKLE  
DIRECTOR, ARMS CONTROL DISARMAMENT AGENCY  
WILLIAM G. HYLAND  
DEPUTY ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT  
FOR NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS  
ROBERT BUCHHEIM  
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SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE COUNSELLOR  
THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
TED GEORGE  
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (SALT SUPPORT)  
THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
AND  
ROBERT DUFF  
ENERGY RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

ROOM 450  
THE OLD EXECUTIVE OFFICE BUILDING

8:36 A.M. EDT

MR. NESSEN: Maybe we can get started here. The crowd is small but exclusive.

You should all have copies of fact sheets and texts of the Treaty. There will be a statement by the President at the time of the signing in the East Room, and we hope to have the text of that shortly, before the end of this briefing or before the signing itself. We should try to break up a little before 9:30 so everyone has a chance to get over to the East Room and see the signing ceremony.

The ground rules will be just on the record, unless any of the briefers have any remarks or answers that they wish to put on another basis.

The President will submit the Treaty to the Senate for ratification soon.

With those brief opening remarks, let me introduce your briefers for today. Dr. Fred Ikle, who is Director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency; Bill Hyland, who is the Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs; Bob Buchheim, who is Deputy Assistant Director at ACDA; Ted George of the Defense Department; John Kelly from State; and Robert Duff from the Energy Research and Development Agency, and John Marcum of the NSC staff.

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I think Fred has some opening remarks he wants to give you.

MR. IKLF: Let me try to explain to you as simply as possible what this very complicated treaty is all about. It compliments the threshold limitation on underground weapons tests which was signed in 1974 limiting underground tests to 150 kilotons. At that time the Soviets wanted to have the possibility of continuing the explosion of nuclear devices for peaceful applications.

The underground weapons test treaty limit weapons test to particular sites, such as our Nevada test sites, sites for which the two sides have to exchange a certain amount of information on geology and other data to facilitate the verification of the threshold.

Now, peaceful applications, of course, will not take place at these weapon test areas. Therefore, additional negotiations had to take place which started in October 1974 in Moscow and continued, to be concluded early in April this year.

There were about 18 months of detailed negotiations leading to this treaty and the protocol governing peaceful application of nuclear explosives. What does the treaty do? The central purpose is to prevent the circumvention of the treaty limiting weapons tests through applications of peaceful devices for peaceful purposes. It does this primarily by limiting the yield of any device to be used for peaceful applications to the same yield permitted for weapons tests. So, there is no incentive for a party to use the route of alleged peaceful applications, to test weapons developments because they are permitted to make these tests at the weapons test sites.

However, there was so much interest in larger engineering applications involving the simultaneous explosion of nuclear devices for engineering purposes, group explosions, and that led to the problem that with our distant measuring instruments, with our seismic measuring instruments, we could only determine the total aggregate yield of such a group of explosions. Hence, we won't know whether there might be a megaton explosion or half a megaton or whether the devices in the group are properly below the threshold.

Therefore, we had to get permission for the on-site observation, and that involved a great deal of complicated detail. We wanted to be sure that when these observations would take place there would be no argument as to what the observers could do, what they could do with their instruments, how close they could get to the devices. We wanted to make sure everything was properly agreed to avoid future disputes.

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You will find the painstaking detail in which this has been worked out in the protocol. Thus, the whole agreement is really a breakthrough in that we are no longer talking about whether or not there should be onsite observation, but we really have walked through the whole problem of what it really means to have onsite observations and how you can do it so both sides are satisfied with their security interests.

Quite a lot of ingenuity had to be expended on this. Let me just give you an anecdote or two. There was the question of the custody of the instruments which have to be used to determine the yield of the explosives in the group. Who should have last custody? There was concern on the Soviet side that these instruments might contain devices which were not in line with the purposes of the measurements, some bugs of some kind or what have you. So they wanted to be able to take the instruments and analyze them.

Then we were concerned this might disable the instruments and they may no longer do the measurements they were supposed to do. So, should we have last custody or should they have last custody? An ingenious solution was found for this problem. We have two identical sets of instruments. The other side will pick one and one will be used and one can be taken apart and analyzed to make sure there are no bugs in the instruments.

In addition, there are two sets of recording devices in both, including the one that will be used. Again, one of these recording devices will be picked at random for each party.

Other problems arose. Taking pictures, photographs, could we take the pictures in the Soviet Union or should they take them. If they take them, how soon can we get the pictures? Again a solution had to be found. The solution worked out is for explosions and peaceful experiments in the Soviet Union, we would give the cameras -- cameras with instant development capability, such as Polaroid and now Eastman Kodak -- and they would take the pictures, so we get the pictures right away. They assured that the photographic equipment is not used for purposes that have nothing to do with the treaty.

What do all these details mean? The details mean that given the overall framework agreement, it is possible for us and the Russians to work out provisions satisfactory to both so that there is not too much observation but the observations are being made to compliment the arms limitation that is inherent in the threshold test ban treaty of 1974.

I think this gives you enough of an introduction of the elements of the treaty. I would be pleased to take any questions, and my colleagues may want to handle additional questions.

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Q Dr. Ikle, could you expand in simple words when onsite inspection can be invoked?

MR. IKLE: It is for peaceful applications, the aggregate yield of which exceeds the 150 kiloton threshold. Remember, each device for peaceful applications is not permitted to exceed the threshold. Therefore, such applications have to consist of several nuclear devices.

Q Let me rephrase my question a little bit. As I understand it, between 100 and 150 kilotons, inspection can only be through mutual consent so there is a possibility the Soviets would reject an American request for inspection in that range. Over 150, do I understand that there is no right to reject a request for onsite inspection?

MR. IKLE: That is right. Over 150 kilotons aggregate yield of a peaceful application, the onsite verification is mandatory. Between 100 and 150 it is based on mutual consultation and it is not mandatory.

Q And under 150 there is no inspection at all?

MR. IKLE: From zero yield of peaceful applications up to 150 there are mandatory provisions for the exchange of information and the information becomes increasingly more detailed the higher the total yield of the peaceful application; more detail after 50, after 75, after 100.

If you read the provisions, the mandatory provisions for peaceful applications between, for example, 100 and 150 kiloton in yield, still below obviously what is permitted on the weapons test sites, you find there is an enormous amount of information, information which now there is absolutely no obligation for the Soviet Union to furnish us.

So, you will have a flow of information coming on their peaceful program, depending of course on the magnitudes of their program, where we now have nothing.

Q Dr. Ikle, the physical onsite inspection question, in the protocol there is a formula in Article 5 or 6 there about the numbers of inspectors, but I couldn't figure it out. Could you illustrate, give us some examples? Also, could you remind us how long this onsite inspection issue has been around with us?

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MR. IKLE: The answer to your first question, it is a very complicated formula determining the numbers of observers, let's say American observers, in the Soviet Union. It depends on the number of devices, the number of emplacement holes. I won't go through the entire formula now. That would take too much time, but let me give you some examples.

If there was a major peaceful application exceeding an aggregate yield of 150 kilotons and maybe going up to one and a half megatons, with let's say 15 emplacement holes, it could be up to 22 observers. For smaller application, they might have about half a dozen or roughly; another way of summarizing it, it might range from say half a dozen to perhaps over 20.

The larger the number of individual devices in the engineering project, the larger the number of observers. Although observers will serve different functions, some groups of observers will have to check on the geology, and other observers will be in charge of the equipment and check the proper installation of the equipment.

Again, this was worked out in such detail so we wouldn't have future arguments as to whether they would let in two or seven or none or what have you.

Q My second question was, how long has this on-site inspection issue been with us?

MR. IKLE: Oh, sorry. Your second question, since 1945. In a way, arms control proposals ever since 1945, the issue of on-site inspection with us, of course in this context of nuclear weapons test limitations the on-site inspection issue came up very much in the late 1950s when the negotiations began on a nuclear test ban.

Q Dr. Ikle, has the data mentioned in the Protocol Sections 1 (a), (b), (c) and (d) been exchanged and have the calibrations been exchanged?

MR. IKLE: No, this has not yet taken place. Preliminary discussions have taken place recording the format of the data.

Q Have the Soviets conducted any tests since March 31, 1976?

MR. IKLE: Well, we have an understanding that there shouldn't be tests for -- this was reached in a tentative fashion on March 31, tests which would be contrary to the agreement. This is a temporary understanding.

Q Have the Soviets conducted any tests since March 31, 1976?

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MR. IKLE: We don't normally go on record on the entire test program, but there have been no tests that would create a problem regarding this treaty whatsoever.

Q Dr. Ikle, what are the purposes that the Soviets have in mind for peaceful explosives, the most specifically you can say?

MR. IKLE: Mining projects, fracturing rocks for mining purposes, putting out oil well fires. There have also been published articles about diverting rivers.

Mr. Duff, are there any other important applications mentioned?

MR. DUFF: Yes. One of the places you might look for a detailed summary of some of this is the IAEA--International Atomic Energy Authority--in Vienna, which conducts a regularly conducted panel, a technical panel. The last was in January 1975. A summary of that panel has been made public and in those reports, this particular one went to the United Nations.

The Soviets have made clear that they have in their view significant things to do in the way of gas concentrate storage, for example.

MR. IKLE: Underground gas storage. We can make these available to any one of you.

Q Is there not a process to divert water into the Caspian Sea?

MR. IKLE: That has been discussed in the literature and Soviet journal articles, but there is no official determination as to the --

Q My final question. Why is it the Russians are so interested in peaceful explosions and since we abandoned the idea of doing a Panama Canal with peace explosions, we don't seem very interested in that.

MR. IKLE: That is right. Our interests have waned. We have no experiments scheduled for peaceful explosions. The last were in 1973 in Colorado, experiments for stimulating natural gas. Our analyses have, at this time, not shown any applications that would be technically feasible and economically warranted.

Apparently the Soviet specialists have come out with different calculations. Of course, they have a somewhat different situation, different geography, different environmental interests in their country.

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Q The agreed statement at the end, I would like to ask a couple of questions about that. One, it seems to go right to the heart of the whole thing. Why did it have to be tacked on later as an agreed statement? Second, I believe it is dated the day after the treaty itself, when the protocols were initialed. Is this something which was a last minute correction to an omission which had been made? Can you explain that whole agreed statement to us?

MR. IKLE: It is a complimentary provision which is supportive of the treaty, but it wasn't found essential to be incorporated in the treaty or the protocol. I don't know whether Mr. Buchheim wants to elaborate further on why it was decided to put it in this format --

Q The date is also curious. It is the date on which originally this whole thing was supposed to have been signed. Were we still fiddling around trying to close the loopholes as of that date?

MR. IKLE: We weren't fiddling around, we had a few more details to finish and rather than doing a sloppy job, we took a few more extra days and did it. Now we think we have everything nailed down in perfection. There was no harm done whatsoever to the arms control interests or the security interests by going a few days beyond that deadline.

Q That is not the point. If the thing had already been initialed, why did we have loopholes left?

MR. IKLE: We don't have loopholes and when it was initialed that statement was completed as well. But, it took a few more days beyond March 31 to work out some of the details of this entire treaty and protocol.

Q I am referring to the initialing, which I believe was May 12.

MR. HYLAND: They were all the same day, all three documents. The protocols and the agreed statement were initialed in Moscow the same day.

Q All the same day, the 13th?

MR. HYLAND: I can't remember the date, but it was all at one time.

MR. IKLE: There is really no significance to this.

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Q I thought it was agreed to much earlier?

MR. IKLE: It did take us a little longer, as I recall, than March 31 to finalize the text.

Q But the significance of it not being part of the treaty, it seems to go right to the heart of the problem, and why was it then left off as a separate agreed statement?

MR. BUCHHEIM: The reason for that particular approach to the document had to do with the background of developing the understanding that is in there.

As Mr. Hyland said, this was negotiated some months ago. In fact, you will notice in the treaty there are definitions of certain terms. There was a substantial amount of effort directed at the problem of defining what is meant by "peaceful application" because that term is used here and there in the treaty and the protocol.

I am sure both in the news business and in the treaty writing business people have had a lot of experience with the great difficulty of defining terms quite precisely. In the end, it is usually easier in a difficult case like this to define what something is not, and in our particular interests it was, to use your term, to go to the heart of what we were concerned about; namely, to be sure that developing of an explosive device was not to be defined as a peaceful application.

There is a certain approach to logic that would have allowed that to be done. For example, one could argue that a peaceful application includes developing an explosive device that is intended to be used for other peaceful applications.

Now, the practical effect of allowing that would be to allow explosions away from the weapons test sites that had no discernible characteristics associated with them except the development of an explosive device. That would have been a loophole in the test ban treaty. Our interest solely was in avoiding the allowance of that step.

Q Does this have a different legal status now? Will this be ratified also?

MR. BUCHHEIM: No, this will go to the Senate with the other documents.

Q But why not insert it in that area where you have definitions in the treaty rather than taking it on at the end?

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MR. BUCHHEIM: The answer to that simply is it was possible and comfortable to negotiate placement of this limitation on the term "peaceful application" rather than as a definition.

Q It also closes the loop to the 1974 weapons test treaty?

MR. BUCHHEIM: Precisely.

MR. IKLE: Of course, the entire structure, of course, the treaty, is totally related to the 1974 treaty, its duration. You will have noted the provision that you cannot get out of the treaty governing peaceful applications as long as the weapons test, the threshold test ban treaty is in force. These are tightly coupled.

Q Mr. Ikle, I have another question. How do you explain the Ford Administration's request for incorporation of \$212 million for weapons testing in 1976 and an estimated \$256 million for weapons testing in fiscal 1977, how that relates to these treaty documents? What are your intentions? In other words, what are the Administration's intentions in testing?

MR. IKLE: These will be tests, of course, under the threshold permitted by this treaty. The Soviet Union we expect will not entirely stop nuclear weapons testing, but they will stop testing in the megaton range. They will start testing down to the agreed threshold.

So, our program of testing below the threshold will continue, and this is what the budget request is for.

Q What are we going to be testing, with all the hundreds of tests that have gone on?

MR. IKLE: Well, these are tests of lower yield and a number of other test applications which will be or have been explained in detail in presenting the budget. Whether Mr. Duff wants to give a quick summary of the purposes of these tests as presented by ERDA --

MR. DUFF: I think it could be related to the Department of Defense request. The Department of Defense request for weapons systems development will still proceed. We will still be required in ERDA to conduct tests to meet those requirements. As Dr. Ikle says, those tests will be conducted within the terms of this treaty below 150 kilotons.

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Q If I could try to ask this in a different manner, in view of the provisions of Article 1, Section 2 of the July 1974 treaty, why are we increasing our testing program by approximately 25 percent in dollars?

MR. DUFF: I think again the thing that you are referring to is the concept of minimum testing, and I think you can be assured that in the review of the budget and developments of the weapons systems requirement, there will be the principle applied of minimum testing, but that does not mean we will have to reduce the amount of testing. It means it will be minimized, as it always has been.

Q Yes, but exactly what is meant by the term "shall limit the number of its underground nuclear weapons tests to a minimum"?

MR. IKLE: That is a provision on which we have no more specific detail than is contained in that sentence, and it reflects an intention to not expand in the long run the test program but to keep it to the minimum national security needs on both sides.

Q In other words, so a short-term increase would be compensated at some later date by a compensating decrease?

MR. IKLE: More important is not to go beyond normal national security needs and begin some massive new approach to testing here.

Q Are there any unilateral statements, agreed statements, unilateral interpretations, agreed interpretations, or anything else, any understandings related to the treaty of July 3, 1974, and this treaty on underground nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes and the protocols thereto contained in United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency Publication 87, anything at all that is not contained right here?

MR. IKLE: There is a detailed negotiating record, of course, which defines the terms and the provisions and as we prepared our presentation to Congress, we will summarize all the essential elements of this detailed negotiating record and to the extent to which it gives additional specificity of the definitions or the intent that goes beyond the text of the treaty. There will be nothing that will not be presented to Congress.

Q Will this all be made public?

MR. IKLE: I would imagine most all of it can be made public or will be presented certainly in Executive Session to Congress.

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Q I mean, what is there that can't be made public? I mean, the Russians know it, we know it.

MR. IKLE: The understanding -- I am guessing just what we can do -- the understandings would be essentially public. On an assessment of the verification capability, things like that, of course we might want to deal with in Executive Session.

MR. HYLAND: There are things about what the Russian military tests in the past, our own military test program that might be relevant in a Congressional hearing, we might go into Executive Session just on something like that, the yields of various devices and so forth.

But, in terms of the treaty and the record and how we got there, there would be no need for that.

Q The test data you are talking about, did that come out of the negotiating record?

MR. HYLAND: No. I say, the Congress could ask a question like you might, what was the size of our last military test? What was the last Russian test of a multiple warhead, that type of stuff we would probably want to keep in Executive Session.

Q You are talking there about data derived solely by the U.S. intelligence community and not data that has already been --

MR. HYLAND: Our own national defense data.

MR. IKLE: Our own assessments of our tests, the design of our weapons and things like that.

Q You are not talking about the negotiating record?

MR. HYLAND: Right.

MR. IKLE: Mr. Buchheim may have another example.

MR. BUCHHEIM: I can give you an example of the very thing Dr. Ikle is referring to in terms of things that are recited in the negotiating record that did not seem necessary or appropriate to write down in the already long treaty document.

For example, toward the end of the negotiating period the U.S. read into the record and received Soviet acknowledgement for the record the various things that we wanted to have under the treaty.

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An example for you is that we read into the record a statement to the effect that the number of observers to be allowed on the site of the PNE project is not to include any U.S. nationals who may be in residence in nearby cities on a standby basis or something of that sort.

For example, if a project authorizes ten observers on the site--for example a given project authorizes ten observers on the site, in view of the fact that over a period of a month or thereabouts the work may go on, it may as a practical matter to exchange individuals. For two weeks you may want a geologist on the team, two weeks later you may want an expert technician associated with some of the implementation.

So, we wanted an understanding that whereas we would not exceed two specified number of observers at the site, we consider it a right to have individuals in the Soviet Union under normal circumstances perhaps residing in a city 50 miles away. That is an example of an understanding.

MR. IKLE: In transit, so to speak.

MR. BUCHHEIM: Or in transit.

Q And all this will be presented to the Congress?

MR. BUCHHEIM: These are formal statements that were read from a text in a formal answer at that time.

Q Is it your understanding that things of this type wouldn't be made public?

MR. BUCHHEIM: Would be.

MR. IKLE: Will be.

Q Dr. Ikle, have the Russians given any indication of how frequently numerically they want to go above the 150 kiloton limit? Is there any mutual understanding that although these things are for peaceful purposes, there may be environmental disadvantages in conducting these kinds of experiments?

MR. IKLE: No, they have not given any indication as to how many of these engineering projects they will want to conduct. My guess would be that they will develop their program on the basis of further research and development of their own.

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The environmental aspects were not of concern in this context of an arms control treaty. Of course, there is a provision of the 1963 test ban treaty regarding radioactive venting and that has been reaffirmed in this agreement.

Q Mr. Ikle, have you figured out who was responsible for this apparent snafu when the Soviets invited some correspondents to attend the signing that then didn't take place? Obviously there was some kind of communications foul-up there. Have you figured out who was responsible for it?

MR. IKLE: I have been wondering whether I should blame myself. I had a longstanding speaking engagement in New York, and it was a damned inconvenient day for me to have the signing because I would like to attend the signing. Therefore, it was just an inconvenient time, but maybe you feel responsible, also?

MR. HYLAND: I am not going to volunteer. The treaty was initialed on the day before a possible day for signing. As that became obvious, the treaty was going to have to get back here on an airplane into Kennedy late at night, been brought down to Washington before a ceremony like we are having today, a text printed up for the press, a briefing laid on and so forth, it was decided that was just getting too cumbersome and too unorganized and we did not have with the Soviets a final, what I would say, sign-off. But, that was the date we were going to see if we could make, and it turned out to be just too cumbersome. By giving ourselves a little more time, we have had a chance to print up the treaty text that you have and to organize some briefings.

Q It was a technical question.

MR. HYLAND: It was a technical question, although you have to remember that initialing is not the final act. It does come back to Washington. Both sides had the right, if they had chosen, after looking at the whole record and the whole treaty, the Soviet side or the American side could have reopened an issue. It is very unusual, but it can happen.

Q Weren't there some domestic American political considerations in the postponement, inasmuch as the Michigan primary --

MR. IKLE: I would say it was the health of the protocol officer. Imagine that poor guy standing there scheduling a ceremony for signing and he wasn't sure that he would have the treaty to sign, what embarrassment.

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Q But you are avoiding a question, which is of great journalistic interest.

MR. HYLAND: I don't think you should be addressing questions on the primaries to Fred or me. We are trying to give you the content of the treaty. If Ron wants to get into it --

MR. NESSEN: I think Bill has given you the reasons for the treaty being signed today at a time mutually agreed upon by the Soviet Union and the United States.

Q It is avoiding my question is what it comes down to.

MR. HYLAND: It is not innocuous if you don't have the treaty in hand to say the President of the United States will sign it in the morning, and if the plane is diverted to Newfoundland --

Q Why wasn't that explained before?

MR. HYLAND: It was.

MR. NESSEN: It was.

Q Could I ask the question another way? I mean, were the Russians hurrying you to sign this treaty? I mean, why did you agree to this date and then have to change it because the plane left 24 hours before?

MR. HYLAND: We were searching after sometime in April, late April, after the texts were gone over for translation and so forth. We had been searching for a convenient date with the President's travel schedule and Brezhnev's schedule, and we could mesh it and do it in an orderly fashion.

Today is the date that was convenient for both sides. I think the President spoke to that, didn't he, Ron? He said he was proud of the achievement.

Q There was no mutual agreement to sign on the day the Russians called the reporters --

MR. HYLAND: We hadn't finalized it with the Russians. The Russians were proceeding, as we were, to see if we could make it by then. Of course, the treaties were in Moscow, which gave them a substantial advantage -- the treaty text.

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MR. IKLE: It was an elaborate courier system and was quite harrowing to wonder, you know, worry whether it would work or not.

Q Two questions, please. First, on the observers, is there any restriction on whether they can be members of the military?

MR. IKLE: No, there is no restriction.

Q Second question. How long do you think it will take you to present all these details to the Senate? How long for ratification?

MR. IKLE: As Mr. Nessen mentioned, we want to submit this to the Senate for ratification soon, and I imagine there will be hearings then, and then it is up to the Senate, of course, to schedule their hearings and see how extensive the hearings should be. This is a choice for the Senate which we cannot make.

We are ready to present it soon. We are just getting the papers and the testimony in shape.

Q Do you think it would take a substantial amount of time to explain as much as you think you need to explain?

MR. IKLE: That depends on the amount of detail that the Senate or the relevant committees choose to elaborate in open hearings as against having their staff or individual members work over it. There are often differences, as you know, in the way in which the Senate acquires information on a treaty of this kind.

Q Dr. Ikle, is there an understanding that no tests will be held until the date mentioned in the protocol of the treaty is exchanged?

MR. IKLE: You mean tests that would be contrary to the treaty?

Q Any nuclear or atomic tests.

MR. IKLE: No, there is no need for any tests being affected. It would only affect tests that would be contrary to these agreements.

Q Are you confident that without this data you can interpret whether or not a test is above or below 150 kilotons and within or without one of the designated test sites?

MR. IKLE: For a long-term, we do want to have the exchange of the geologic information. For the short-term, we do not expect the fact that the information has not been exchanged, or the exchange has not yet been completed. We do not expect that to be a problem.

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Q When do you expect this would occur, the data exchange?

MR. IKLE: Certainly there is a specific provision that upon ratification this will be completed.

Q Is there a provision -- I really have not had time to go through the whole thing -- for onsite inspection of the geological area of the test sites?

MR. IKLE: No, there is not.

Q So, there is no assurance that the geological data we are getting -- for instance, whether it is Soviet soil or hard rock -- is true?

MR. IKLE: This question, of course, relates to the 1974 agreement, not the one that we will sign today?

Q Right.

MR. IKLE: And there is no provision for onsite verification of the geological information on the weapons test sites. So, we have to just use the information that will be exchanged and additional information that we can develop as our own national means of verification to try to verify and cross-check this information.

Q Do we have any national technical means as opposed to national human means of verifying the correctness of the geological data provided?

MR. IKLE: I would rather not go into sources and methods --

Q I don't want to go into what it is, I just want to know if we have some system of verifying it.

MR. IKLE: We have, as you know, a system of national technical means to make a number of observations. We would rely on cross-checking the information provided from the information exchange.

Q You are convinced using our national technical means we can verify the geological data supplied by the Russians?

MR. IKLE: We can make cross-checks and try to determine the validity of the data and we will have further details on this in our testimony to Congress, some of which may have to be in Executive Session because it would touch on sources and methods of our verification systems.

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Q Do you have any estimate of the confidence level of these, you know, once you make the determination with cross-checking?

MR. IKLE: This is an important and very good question, with how much certainty can you determine the yield of a weapons test. That is a long and complicated story, getting into the statistics of the seismic observations.

Again we will present this in detail to the Senate in our testimony.

Q Do you have an expectation there will be such a test that would invite the attention of onsite inspection? In other words, you expect this treaty would be applied?

MR. IKLE: I would think it is quite possible, given a program that we have heard Soviet experts talk about or that they have written about, that there would be these onsite observations. Incidentally, let me remind you what is permitted under the treaty, which will be assigned today are not tests. They are peaceful applications of nuclear devices.

If they are to be tested, as we discussed before, they have to be tested at the weapons test site. There is no peaceful nuclear tests. They are peaceful applications.

Now let me get back to your broader question. In this whole business about onsite observation, about which we have been talking now since 1945 and never really worked it out --

Q To the layman, I think any atomic explosion is a test, in a sense. You are never really quite sure what it is going to do.

MR. IKLE: You are quite right. It may be a test of the effects, the applications, much as our applications in Colorado were tests as to the peaceful engineering effects. But the device itself, to develop a device in and by itself regardless of the peaceful effects it may have, that development should take place at the weapons development test sites.

One more point on the verification. The onsite inspection is not a purpose in and by itself. It is not the end purpose we are trying to go after. What we want to do is to be able to monitor arms control agreements. If there are no events taking place which jeopardize our ability to monitor arms control agreements by national technical means, we don't want onsite observations, so we are fully satisfied either way.

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Q Dr. Ikle, am I right in thinking all these provisions for onsite inspection would apply to peaceful explosions in foreign countries?

MR. IKLE: Yes, you are right. if they are conducted by one of the treaty partners.

Q Secondly, what happened to the Egyptian project for digging a canal into the Queretara Depression? Is that going the way the Panama Canal did here?

MR. IKLE: It might go that way. It is being talked about and there are some low-level -- I mean small -- studies going on about the project, environmental implications, what kind of explosives, conventional or nuclear, might be most appropriate.

Q The Egyptians didn't want Russian inspectors. Therefore, the Americans couldn't use the nuclear devices?

MR. IKLE: If you imagine that there was a question of U.S. nuclear devices being used in the country where those would be used, let's say Egypt would refuse the inspection, then we couldn't do these applications, you are right. This is spelled out very specifically in the treaty.

Q Not at all or not over 150 KTs?

MR. IKLE: Not at all.

Q You said there have been no peaceful explosions in the U.S. since 1973. Are there none planned now that you know of?

MR. IKLE: There are no plans now.

Q What accounts for the fact that 3.4 appears in Article 1 of the protocol to the treaty?

MR. BUCHHEIM: That is an example of several additional concerns that were built into the protocol for a variety of purposes. This particular one is there to prevent the acquisition of certain weapons effects data. It was in order to get certain kinds of weapons effects data which should not be acquired through peaceful nuclear explosions. It is appropriate to constrain the depths to a certain minimum figure. That is the purpose of that provision.

Q In other words, it has to be that figure or deeper?

MORE

MR. IKLE: That is correct. If it is less deep than that, there is a potential to acquire weapons effects data associated with certain atmospheric explosions which are, of course, precluded by the intended purposes of the 1963 treaty.

Q You are talking about some kind of electric magnetic radiation here, the weapons effect?

MR. IKLE: That is one possibility. That is one type of weapons effect. There are other weapon effects that are also -- the testing which is also precluded by writing this depth constraint. In others, some of the phenomena would be at the surface.

Q Wouldn't the depth figure vary widely according to geological conditions? You wouldn't need to go very deep in rock compared to having to go very deep in soil.

MR. IKLE: It is correct that if it were necessary to make the matter that collection, if there were some driving motivation to be able to shoot off shots just as shallowly as possibly, then that could have turned into a long, elaborate article in the protocol, as some of the other things were. Fortunately, it was possible to reach agreement in this case on a figure that covers all such media.

Q Where does this leave canal digging through rocky areas? For instance, you are trying to collapse something to make a canal and you have very hard rocky situations.

MR. BUCHHEIM: This particular constraint is not of substantial significance in those terms. It is directed solely at inhibiting the opportunity for weapons effects testing. However, the question you ask is tied in with the reaffirmation of the need to comply with the limited test ban treaty of 1964.

From the standpoint of U.S. knowledge and experience with the phenomenology, it is not possible to do such things under this agreement, and that is very important to the nuclear ban.

Q So they can convert this?

MR. BUCHHEIM: That would be our opinion. If they invent some new scientific principle we would be happy to listen to them and watch it, but so far as we know it cannot be done.

Q Will the provisions for the Joint Consultation Commission under Article 5 be done under several regulations?

MORE

MR. IKLE: They have to be worked out, yes.

Q Will all that be released?

MR. IKLE: I would imagine so. I see no reason why it shouldn't be.

Q Because there was some agreement that the SCC rules and regulations are not being released but the JCC will be released?

MR. IKLE: We haven't really made that decision yet. As far as I look forward to this contingency, I don't see any reason why it shouldn't be released.

Q In Article 1 of the protocol, Section 2, any group explosion with a planned aggregate yield exceeding 500 kilotons should not include more than five individual explosions each of which has a planned yield not exceeding 50 kilotons. If I multiply five by 50, I get less than 500.

MR. IKLE: There would be some larger yield in that group and the reason for that provision is that there shouldn't be a great many small explosions in one of these large engineering projects because there would be uncertainty in verifying the yield of the small explosions so that we create an artificial deficit in the total yield under which they could hide a large weapons test.

Q You have withheld nothing about the actual diplomacy of negotiating this treaty. As I understand it, the United States is getting a major breakthrough on the principle of onsite inspection and the Russians are getting return permission to use these large peaceful explosions. I mean, was there any understanding -- first, the Russians refused to negotiate this treaty in order not to allow onsite inspection. Was their understanding or discussion that the early 1974 treaty would be made null and void and you --

MR. IKLE: That was made very clear. We made very clear from the outset in 1974 that we would not submit to the Senate for ratification the 1974 threshold weapons test ban before this treaty had been completed because they are so completely tied together there would be an incomplete story and obviously it would have massive loopholes then.

THE PRESS: Thank you, gentlemen.

END (AT 9:25 A.M. EDT)