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NSC 1-21-76

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

~~TOP SECRET~~/SENSITIVE - XGDS

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT
FROM: BRENT SCOWCROFT
SUBJECT: Talking Points for Today's NSC Meeting
on SALT

I have attached talking points you could use at the NSC meeting this afternoon on SALT.

The talking points briefly outline the Soviet response to our earlier proposal and Secretary Kissinger's recommended follow-on negotiating strategy. They also include a few observations you may wish to make regarding the relative merits of the various ideas being discussed in Moscow.

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Classified by Brent Scowcroft



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TALKING POINTS

1. You have all received a copy of the memo reporting on Henry's first meeting with Brezhnev. I would like to run through the Soviet response and Henry's recommended approach, and ask you for your comments.

Soviet Response

2. On ALCMs, the Soviets seem prepared to accept our proposals to count heavy bombers with ALCMs over 600 km in range in the 1320 MIRV limit, and to ban all ALCMs over 2500 km. However, they want to count B-1s equipped with ALCMs as three against the 1320 MIRV limit.

3. On SLCMs, they agree with us that SLCMs over 600 km should be banned from submarines. However, they would also like to ban SLCMs over 600 km on surface ships.

4. Similarly, they would like to ban all land-based cruise missiles over 600 km.

5. Brezhnev also emphasized again that the Backfire could not be counted as a strategic weapon and listed its range as 2200-2400 km.

6. In this regard, Gromyko told Henry that deferral was out of the question since this would grant us a favor by continuing to consider how to count Backfire.

Henry's Approach

7. In light of Brezhnev's and Gromyko's remarks, Henry believes we should explore a modified version of Option III. His approach would put Backfire and surface ship SLCMs in a separate category for limitations which would run for only five years, from 1977 to 1982.

8. Henry would like to start out by including in this separate category 250 Backfires and about 25 ships with 10-15 launchers each.

9. On land-based cruise missiles, Henry also notes that we could either ban intercontinental cruise missiles -- and thus permit shorter ranges -- or ban all missiles above 2500 km.



My Observations

10. I would like to make a few observations.
11. First of all, the Soviets still appear intransigent on counting Backfire, and the idea of counting the B-1 as three systems within the 1320 MIRV limit would seriously constrain our MIRV deployments and would be extremely difficult for us to live with. On the positive side, however, they have accepted our ALCM proposal and seem quite interested in reaching an agreement.
12. Henry's strategy is to avoid directly confronting Brezhnev on the issue of the number of Backfire in 1985. His approach would be to let Brezhnev save face by appearing to leave open the possibility of eventual full deployment of Backfire. It would limit them to 250 Backfire by 1982. By contrast, Option III would let them have only 50 additional Backfire by 1985.
13. On the other hand, the limitation on the separate category would expire just about the time our surface ship cruise missile development program is peaking. This would give us leverage in follow-on negotiations, or put us in a position to expand our deployments if necessary.
14. We would also have the advantage of not limiting our cruise missile technology. This would be another plus.
15. I would be interested in hearing your comments.

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