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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

TOP SECRET / SENSITIVE XGDS

MINUTES

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING

PART II of II

DATE: Tuesday, January 13, 1976
TIME: 12:00 p.m. to 12:30 p.m.
PLACE: Cabinet Room, White House
SUBJECT: SALT

Principals

The President
Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger
Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld
Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General George S. Brown
Director of Central Intelligence William Colby
Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs Brent Scowcroft

Other Attendees

White House: Mr. Richard Cheney, Assistant to the President
Mr. William G. Hyland, Deputy Assistant to the
President for National Security Affairs
State: Mr. Helmut Sonnenfeldt
Defense: Deputy Secretary William Clements
Dr. James P. Wade, Jr.
NSC Staff: Colonel Richard T. Boverie



NOTE: The following are minutes of that portion of the NSC meeting which addressed SALT. The NSC meeting had been convened at 10:00 a.m. principally to discuss an Israeli military request. The SALT portion followed the discussion of the Israeli request.

TOP SECRET / SENSITIVE XGDS (B) (3)

Classified by Brent Scowcroft

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4.

MR 93-45, #1 NSC Mr. 1/2/93

By Kott NARA Date 2/7/94

President Ford: I would like to discuss the negotiating strategy to follow for SALT. If there is a decision for Henry to go to Moscow, he will first talk to Dobrynin, then leave for the Soviet Union the night of the 19th, after my State of the Union address.

At this moment -- this is still related to Angola -- I would like Henry to go to Moscow. Henry will probably have his initial meeting with Dobrynin within the next 48 hours.

Secretary Kissinger: I will meet with Dobrynin as soon after a decision as possible.

President Ford: Two issues were highlighted by the charts used at the last NSC meeting: Backfire, and surface ship SLCMs.

Option IV counts the Backfire in the aggregate level of 2400. The option doesn't include surface ships with SLCMs as such.

It seems to me -- and I have made the decision myself -- that we need an option which is a little different from IV and III. At my request, Brent came up with a paper on a new option. Secretary Kissinger should utilize it in his initial discussions.

This new option has the following features:

With respect to Backfire, for the period between now and the expiration of the Interim Agreement on October 3, 1977, the number of Backfires produced would not be counted. Therefore, the Soviets would have 100 to 120 Backfires on hand which would not be counted.

Second, subsequent to October 3, 1977, all Backfires produced would be counted under the 2400 ceiling.

This gives the Soviets the option to continue production of Backfire. If they do continue Backfire production, they would then have to eliminate some of their other missiles or Bisons or other systems.

The other part of the proposal Henry is to submit to the Soviets involves surface ships with SLCMs. SLCMs with greater than 600 kilometer range on surface ships would be counted the same as ALCMs on heavy bombers. They would count in the 1320 MIRV limit.

General Brown: The ships count?

Secretary Kissinger: That's right. The ships count as MIRVs.



President Ford: This is a good starting position. Henry said that Option IV was not a good way to start. This is not Option IV but a variant of Option IV.

We do not know what the reaction will be but we will find out. On the assumption that it is not negotiable, we would then go to Option III. My feeling, if we do not get Option III, is that we should explore Option I as a last alternative.

This approach preserves our flexibility, and gives us our military capability. I would like George's observations -- now or later if you want to think it over.

General Brown: My general and immediate reaction is that the number of Backfires excluded is not troublesome. This can be rationalized as an offset against the FB-111. What's new is counting bombers and surface ships in the MIRV limit. The Chiefs have agreed with counting bombers with ALCMs in the MIRV limit, but have not addressed including surface ships. My personal reaction is that this is a reasonable thing and I will try to be persuasive with the Chiefs.

President Ford: I believe this approach is a reasonable position, but the bind is, if the Soviets turn it down, we go to Option III -- which has a diametrically opposed position on surface ships with SLCMs.

General Brown: The treatment of surface ships in Option III is not as much a problem as the treatment of Backfire. Not counting the Backfire will be seen as breaking through the ceiling established at Vladivostok. This is something the guy in the street understands.

However, by having raised Option IV, or a variation of Option IV as you have suggested, it will not be as difficult to stand behind Option III if we eventually wind up with that Option. If we did not try Option IV, or a variant of Option IV, at the beginning, it would be bad. I can rationalize in my own mind offsetting the 120 Backfires with the FB-111s.

President Ford: This approach is similar to that which was developed by Secretary Kissinger and Secretary Schlesinger.

General Brown: But it goes beyond that approach.



Secretary Kissinger: I would be delighted if they accept this variant but I don't believe they will. We will give it to them as soon as possible and they will have a week to study it. But even if they turn it down, we can in good conscience say that we tried, that we did not engage in preemptive concessions.

As to Option III, we talk as though it will be easy to get; that is not all that clear. Option III puts constraints on them. We will have to wait and see.

I have two other issues I would like to address; these concern the debate on violations.

Secretary Rumsfeld: We are not leaving the subject, are we?

Secretary Kissinger: On this subject, we cannot go to Moscow unless everybody stands behind me. We cannot afford to have individuals expressing "private doubts." We should present everything as a united front.

I have serious reservations about going under these conditions. If I could not go, we could present Option IV at Geneva. However, there are some arguments for my going. Brezhnev may be willing to do certain things before the Congress that he wouldn't be willing to do afterwards. Brezhnev can't afford a failure of this negotiation and also Angola at the same time.

If we cancel the trip because of Angola, Congressional critics will say we are jeopardizing SALT because of Angola.

Therefore, there is a slight balance in favor of my going to Moscow.

President Ford: Don, would you like to say something?

Secretary Rumsfeld: I would like a little time to look this over -- a day or so -- and then get back to you, rather than immediately comment on the approach.

President Ford: Brent can give you a copy of the paper.

Brent Scowcroft: I have given a copy to Don.



Secretary Rumsfeld: I haven't had a chance to read it yet.

Secretary Kissinger: The announcement of my trip to Moscow is set for tomorrow. We can't postpone the announcement.

Secretary Rumsfeld: I haven't read the paper yet and I want to study it before I comment. I am not embarrassed to say that.

Secretary Kissinger: The announcement of my trip is set for tomorrow.

Secretary Rumsfeld: But you had publicly stated that you didn't want to go to Moscow until we had our position settled. You are pre-judging the decision.

President Ford: Don, why don't you work with George (Brown) and Bill (Colby) on your view of the approach. This is the right thing to do, and I want you to do it.

As I have studied the options, this variant is no major shift from Option IV in original terms. If you can come back tonight, we can look at this and Angola at the same time, so we will know better where we stand on Angola and SALT.

Director Colby: I take a little question on Henry's point. Brezhnev will not be under great pressure to give in to us -- if anything it will be just the opposite. There is an incentive to him to be a good strong leader to his "apparatchiks" before the Party Congress. A little toughening occurs before the Party Congress.

Secretary Kissinger: Except he has been pressuring for this trip. For the trip to fail would not be an easy decision for him.

Mr. Hyland: As was shown in the case of the ABM Treaty, the effect of the Party Congress is to wrap something up to have to present to the Congress. The toughest situation would be one in which he would have no program to explain.

Mr. Sonnenfeldt: This is important to Brezhnev since time is running out.

President Ford: There is the health factor.

Don, I would like it if you would let me have your paper by 6:00 tonight giving me your thoughts and reactions. I also want to talk with you and Henry about Angola.

