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4. ~~Getting back on the new SALT agreement. How does this new agreement affect the balance in MBFR? What is the status of our negotiations? Did we consult our allies on the new SALT agreement?~~

Guidance: The new agreement does not affect European force relationships so it does not directly affect MBFR.

12/74
(IF ASKED: There was never any direct relationship between FBS (Forward based systems) in SALT and nuclear systems in MBFR. So the SALT agreement has no direct impact on MBFR.)

Guidance: We are nearing completion of the current negotiating session. Although no breakthrough has been achieved both sides continue to conduct the negotiations in a serious manner, and are actively searching for areas of compromise.

We have of course discussed SALT in detail with our allies in preparation for current negotiations and we will discuss the results of the Vladivostok trip at the highest levels in the near future.

K gg to NATO in Dec (11-12)
will give comprehensive briefing
at that time

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

December 12, 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR RON NESSEN

FROM: *for* LES JANKA/KATHLEEN TROIA

SUBJECT: Morning Press Items

FOR RESPONSE TO QUERY:
ITEMS ~~TO BE ANNOUNCED OR VOLUNTEERED~~

1. I am aware that there has been considerable interest in the Aide Memoire with the Soviet Union on SALT. I want you to know that the Aide Memoire was initialed by Secretary Kissinger and Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin Tuesday morning before the Secretary left for Brussels.
- STATE SAID
yesterday
That*

(DO NOT get involved in a discussion on why this announcement was not made earlier, or what the complications were that held-up the Aide Memoire.)

12/12/74
If asked whether we will make the Aide Memoire public you should answer along the following lines:

"Diplomatic exchanges are not normally published. All of the substance has already been announced. In any case, we will first give the Aide Memoire text to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, ~~and after that we will consider the question of publication which also requires the consent of the Soviets.~~"

SALT NEGOTIATIONS

Q. It has been reported (Baltimore Sun) that U.S. -Soviet negotiations on nuclear weapons had frozen on two fundamental U.S. demands (related to the Backfire strategic bomber and MIR ceilings). Are the reports true, and what is the President's reaction?

A. As you know, the SALT negotiations have been in session since late January. The two sides are now in recess and will be reconvening in June. Both sides have tabled the texts of draft treaties. The President will be reviewing carefully the status of the SALT negotiations during the recess.

~~I would draw your attention to the President's remarks during his press conference this week when he said we are going to make progress in negotiations for a SALT II Agreement. It has not been finalized, but the atmosphere is good.~~ At this time I see no reason to add anything further

to the President's remarks *during his press conference this week.*

BREZHNEV VISIT

Q. It would seem that the Brezhnev visit has been postponed once more. Can you tell us why? Are the SALT negotiations going badly? Has the new Middle East interim agreement caused a setback in our relations?

A. As you know, no specific date for General Secretary

Brezhnev's visit has ever been ~~tied down~~, *set so it's not accurate* but we have *to talk about postponements.*
~~said that he would visit the U.S. subsequent to signing a~~

~~SALT II Agreement.~~

I would refer you to Secretary's Kissinger's remarks of yesterday on this question.

IF PRESSED:

He made the following points:

1. The basic issues on SALT were settled at Vladivostok; *further progress made at Helsinki.*
2. There are two or three issues of great importance on which agreement has not yet been reached, but on which if agreement were reached, the negotiation could be concluded within six to eight weeks after that.

3. We will discuss the major issues with Gromyko and

we still expect to receive the General Secretary

in Washington by the end of the year.

*HAK - Gromyko (in Wash)
Late this month
HAK 99 to USSR.*

4. There is no essential delay; we are on course.

FYI ONLY: See Page 16, transcript of the Secretary's briefing.

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS ON SALT

Q. Yesterday in Omaha the President seemed to imply that a SALT II agreement may not be a possibility soon. Is that in fact, a correct interpretation, and if so, does this mean that General Secretary Brezhnev may not be visiting this year?

A. I would not place that interpretation on the President's remarks. The situation is unchanged; neither is our position on the desirability for attaining an agreement. As far as General Secretary Brezhnev's visit is concerned you will recall Secretary Kissinger's remarks on this question at his last press conference:

"As far as SALT is concerned, the basic issues of principle were settled at Vladivostok. Several other issues of great consequence have been settled in the meantime. We are now down to two or three issues of great importance on which agreement has not yet been reached, but on which, if agreement were reached, the negotiation could be concluded within 6 to 8 weeks after that.

We expect to discuss those issues with Foreign Minister Gromyko when he is here, and we still expect to receive the General Secretary in Washington before the end of this year."
At this time we still expect a visit from Brezhnev this year.

SALT TACKS IN JEOPARDY?

Q. Les Gelb reports today that Administrative sources are saying that the possibilities for a SALT agreement in the near future are in jeopardy, and that there are genuine philosophical differences on U. S. negotiating differences on U. S. negotiating positions. Would you comment?

A. The negotiations, as you know, are in progress with two or three issues remaining to be resolved. As for philosophical differences, I can only reiterate what was said at the State Department the other day (10/14/75) in response to a similar question: "that certainly on the main features of our position.... that both the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense are in agreement on it." Secretary Kissinger indicated Sunday on Meet the Press that Foreign Minister Gromyko has U. S. "propositions" to which we are awaiting a response.

There is one proposition arrived at jointly by the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense and approved by the President.

Per HAK: *"The basic premise of the Gelb story is wrong."*

AVIATION WEEKLY ON SALT VIOLATIONS

Q. Aviation Weekly has recently asserted that President Ford and Secretary Kissinger are carrying out a deliberate policy of secrecy and deception in concealing Soviet SALT violations. Would you comment?

A. Regarding allegations of Soviet "violations" of the SALT agreements, let me reemphasize that we have no evidence that the Soviets are in violation of the SALT agreements. As we have indicated previously, some ambiguities have arisen which relate to the precise interpretation of several provisions of the SALT agreements. We have referred these ambiguities to the Standing Consultative Commission in Geneva, a joint US-Soviet body which was established in 1972 just for this purpose. To date we have been successful in resolving most of the ambiguities and we are continuing to seek clarification of the remaining ones.

*F.Y.I.
If pressed:*

On the issue of administration estimates of Soviet nuclear weapons strength, we know of no effort to "distort" our estimates of Soviet strength. The intelligence community is in agreement on the present level of Soviet strategic forces. There may be some differences as to future levels of Soviet strength, but whenever there are such differing projections, the President

is presented with a range of estimates which include all differing views within the intelligence community. However, any differing views on projections of Soviet forces in no way constitute "distortions" or "double bookkeeping."

R.N.
March 1, 1976

IKLE ON THE CRUISE MISSILE

New reports over the weekend carry stories about ACDA Chief Ikle's remarks on the cruise missile and its verification problems in any SALT agreement.

Ikle's remarks were not carefully stated and were not construed properly in reporting. His office will issue clarifying statements for the record today.

If asked: about the reports, we should say that there has been unanimity among Administration officials on the U.S. SALT negotiating positions. State and DOD will follow suit.

FYI: ACDA Public Affairs official is *Pedro San Juan* ~~Ralph Smith~~: 632-0392.

Text of Oswald Johnston article attached.

A NEW SALT PROPOSAL

Q. There are rumors that we have received a new SALT proposal from the Soviets. Can you confirm the stories, and if so, does the proposal lead you to believe that a SALT Agreement is imminent?

A. I can confirm that we have received a reply from the Soviets on SALT (last week). They have given us some considerations which we are studying. The proposals should be viewed as another step in our ongoing negotiations on SALT, but beyond that I would not want to characterize the proposals or their implications for a SALT Agreement.

MONDALE ON SALT

Q. There have been rumors of an imminent breakthrough in the SALT Talks. Senator Mondale says he hopes the President won't sign an agreement just for political capital. How do you react to that?

A. We are continuing to work toward conclusion of a new SALT Agreement, building on the accords reached at Vladivostok. The exchange of views that has taken place in the past few months has led to progress on several issues and provided further insight into the position of both sides on unresolved issues. I won't speculate on timing, but it is important to realize that a great deal of work has already been done and if the remaining obstacles can be resolved, an agreement ~~can be quickly concluded~~ ^{will then be possible. AS THE PRESIDENT HAS SAID,} We will continue the talks -- always being guided by what serves U.S. interests -- and without regard to political pressures, charges or predictions.

SALT - SUMMIT

Q: The Christian Science Monitor quotes an advisor of the President as seeing an imminent breakthrough in the SALT talks. Do you expect any real progress in negotiating a new SALT agreement this year, including a possible summit in October.

A: We are continuing to work toward conclusion of a new SALT agreement. The exchange of views that has taken place in the past few months has led to progress on several issues and provided further insight into the position on both sides on unresolved issues. I won't speculate on timing or comment on such speculative press reports. We will continue the talks -- always being guided by what serves U.S. interests -- and without regard to pace, politics, or press predictions.

SALT

Q: Where do the SALT negotiations stand -- are we making any progress? Have we responded to the Soviet note of last March?

A: We are continuing to work toward conclusion of a new SALT agreement. I am not going to attempt to characterize exchanges with the Soviets as to which side "owes" the other a response. The important thing is that discussions with the Soviets on the unresolved issues are continuing. Our SALT delegation began a much needed recess on July 30 after being almost continuously in session since January 28. These negotiations will resume in Geneva on September 21.

The exchange of views that has taken place in the past few months has led to progress on several issues and provided further insight into the position of both sides on unresolved issues. A number of obstacles remain, however, ~~such as~~ ^{as} particularly the Backfire and cruise missile issues. We will continue our effort to resolve these issues and ^{To} conclude an agreement that serves our national interest without regard to any arbitrary timetable or political considerations.

REP. KEMP UNHAPPY ON SALT ?

Q: Any comment on the Evans-Novak article today reporting that Rep. Jack Kemp feels the White House did not adequately respond to his letter to the President on SALT?

A: I cannot speak for the Congressman and therefore cannot comment on the allegations of that column. I do know that the response to Rep. Kemp by General Scowcroft on the President's behalf was fully responsive to the Congressman's questions.

F.Y.I.: We will not release the text of the two page, single spaced letter. It is up to the Congressman to do so if he wishes.

Further F.Y.I. If asked whether the President plans to fire the "courageous" Fred Ikle, you should refuse to comment on such speculative charges.

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SALT

Q: Ambassador Alex Johnson said yesterday that a SALT II Agreement is likely before November 2. In the Boston Globe, Bill Beecher says negotiations are at a standstill. Has the U.S. responded to the Soviet note? What is the situation?

A: We are continuing to work toward conclusion of a new SALT agreement. The exchange of views that has taken place in the past few months has led to progress on several issues and provided further insight into the position of both sides on unresolved issues. The talks in Geneva resume today. I won't speculate on timing nor am I prepared to give details on our contacts with the Soviets. As the President indicated in his last press conference, we will continue the talks -- always being guided by what serves U.S. interests -- and without regard to pace, politics, or press predictions.

SALT DISCUSSIONS WITH
GROMYKO

Q: The Boston Globe reports today that in Secretary Kissinger's meeting with Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko in New York last week, the U.S. repeated its proposal of last February that the cruise missile and Backfire issues be deferred and the Soviets rejected this approach more firmly than before. Can you comment on these discussions and the prospects for a SALT TWO agreement?

A: President Ford and Secretary Kissinger discussed SALT at some length in their meeting with Foreign Minister Gromyko last week. As far as the prospects for an agreement are concerned, the President has noted that Gromyko told him "that the Soviet Union was interested in narrowing the differences and reaching a realistic and sound compromise." The President expressed his view that "with goodwill on both parts, hard bargaining by both parties, "a reasonable compromise can be reached that will result in an agreement that is in the best interest of all parties.

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UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION
ON SOUTH AFRICA

Q: Will the United States veto the UN Security Council resolution to impose mandatory sanctions against South Africa.

A: The President, as evidenced by his continued efforts towards a peaceful resolution of the problems in Southern Africa, remains very concerned over events affecting developments in either Rhodesia or Namibia. With respect to the UN Resolution, I think it is premature to speculate on the limited States position.

If Pressed:

We are studying the language very closely, however we are not prepared to announce our vote in advance of the fact.

October 26, 1976

SALT

Q: Soviet Party Leader Brezhnev claims that talks on new strategic arms limitations are at a standstill which he attributes to the "complexities of the election situation" in the United States. Has the Administration deliberately avoided progress in the SALT talks this year?

A: We are continuing to work toward conclusion of a new SALT agreement. The exchange of views that has taken place in the past few months has led to progress on several issues and provided further insight into the position on both sides on unresolved issues. I won't speculate on timing. We will continue the talks -- always being guided by what serves U. S. interests -- and without regard to pace, politics, or press predictions.

GRAIN SHIPMENTS TO THE SOVIET UNION

Q: Soviet Party Leader Brezhnev has announced that the Soviet Union expects to have a bumper grain harvest this year. How will this affect U. S. grain shipments to the Soviet Union?

A: The agreement which we concluded last fall committed the Soviet Union to purchase 6 million tons of U. S. grain per year and gives them the option of buying an additional 2 million tons. Fluctuations in the Soviet harvest have no impact on their commitments under this agreement, and we expect them to continue to purchase substantial amounts of agricultural commodities from the West.

November 17, 1976

SALT

Does the President think he can get a SALT Treaty finalized before his term ends?

As I have said before, we have continued to work towards conclusion of a new SALT agreement. The exchange of views that has taken place in the past few months has led to progress on several issues. I cannot speculate on timing. Talks have continued in Geneva -- always being guided by what serves U. S. interests.

5. Do you have any comment on a UPI report that the U.S. is asking the Soviet Union to explain possible violations of the 1972 SALT agreements? Can you confirm that the Soviets have complained to the U. S. about canvas covers placed over American missile silos in possible violation of the 1972 agreements?

GUIDANCE: I can confirm that the standing consultative commission created in the 1972 SALT agreement did hold a meeting in Geneva today, but I am not going to discuss the details of the work of the SCC. I think you will recall that in early December there were a number of stories about possible violations and the President said at that time that he had the responsibility to clear up any ambiguities that had arisen under the SALT agreement, and such clarifications are the work of the SCC.

If pushed on whether the U. S. has violated the agreement you should simply say that the U. S. is not in violation of the SALT agreements, but you are not discussing the details of the various reports on these matters.

SALT

Q: Reports say you have assured the Soviet leaders of extensive efforts to further arms limitation negotiations. Other reports say the US has no agreed SALT position. Where do you plan to go next on SALT?

A: Shortly after I took office, I sent a message to General Secretary Brezhnev reaffirming our commitment to further substantive negotiations on the limitation of strategic arms. I personally gave this same message to Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko during our discussions in Washington last month.

The SALT negotiations resumed in Geneva in mid-September and have now been in continuous session for almost six weeks. As agreed at the recent Moscow Summit, this round of negotiations is focusing on an agreement covering the period until 1985. The US Delegation in Geneva has been putting forth the US position on the framework for the 1985 agreement. The Soviets have similarly been putting forth their position. Obviously, at this stage of the negotiations we have not resolved all the differences in the positions of the two sides. We believe, however, there is common ground which can form the basis for an agreement.

Secretary Kissinger was in Moscow last week discussing a number of topics of mutual interest with the Soviet leadership. SALT was a major topic of discussion and some progress was made in narrowing our differences with the Soviets and laying a foundation for movement toward an agreement. I am looking forward to additional discussions on SALT in the Vladivostok meeting.

SALT - FURTHER REDUCTIONS

Q: Several Senators (Kennedy, Mondale, Mathias) have said that we should go back to the Soviets and renegotiate lower levels than in the Vladivostok agreement. Do you agree?

A: The Vladivostok Agreement resulted from the five years of detailed and difficult negotiations we have undertaken in SALT since November 1969. The levels in that agreement were a key part of those negotiations and represent a major step in the process of significantly reducing strategic forces. The Agreement also provides for follow-on negotiations for further reductions. We expect such negotiations to be referred to in the final agreements and have them commence at the earliest possible time after the Vladivostok agreements are completed.

We view the resolution of Senators Kennedy, Mondale and Mathias as supporting the Vladivostok Agreement. We welcome this constructive action which will help achieve the objectives of that Agreement and which will serve as a guideline for further arms control negotiations upon completion of the Agreement. The work of the three senators is an excellent example of how Congress and the Executive can cooperate to advance the national interest.

SALT

Q: Senator Jackson says he does not like the Vladivostok agreement because it sets levels too high and leaves advantages in throw weight for the Soviets. Also, he raises the question of whether there were any secret agreements made in Vladivostok. Can you comment on these points?

A: The Aide Memoire which contains the details of the Vladivostok agreement has been transmitted to the appropriate committees of Congress. I am hopeful that when Senator Jackson has an opportunity to study this document carefully, he will recognize that the agreement reached in Vladivostok is in our interest and fully protects our military and security needs. I would in that regard, call your attention to the resolution introduced by Senators Kennedy, Mathias, and Mondale commending the agreement.

The ceilings established by the Vladivostok agreement will result in two important benefits. First, they will reduce the need for defense planning on both sides motivated by fear of what the other side might conceivably do in the absence of agreed ceilings. Such planning leads to ever increasing expenditures for strategic forces.

Second, the levels of the Vladivostok agreement are much lower than our intelligence projections of what would be the case in the absence of an agreement. It is not reasonable to compare the Vladivostok numbers with some ideal limits that were not negotiable.

We believe that these levels are a solid achievement for the U.S. under any criteria, and especially when compared to what would have happened in the absence of an agreement.

Regarding throw weight, we have the option to increase the throw weight of our ICBMs if we conclude that it is necessary. There is nothing in the Interim Agreement or in the Vladivostok Agreement which prevents us from taking that step.

However, I might add that missile throw weight is only one measure of strategic power. Proper consideration must also be given to other measures of strategic strength, such as missile accuracy, number of nuclear warheads, and the number of strategic bombers. In each of these areas the U.S. holds a substantial advantage over the Soviet Union.

There are no secret agreements.

SALT

Q: The SALT talks have now resumed in Geneva. How do you assess the prospects for a new agreement? Will the U.S. SALT delegation in Geneva be seeking additional limitations on strategic arms over and above those agreed to in Vladivostok?

A: I have confidence that the terms of an agreement can be worked out by the two sides. The guidelines already agreed to by General Secretary Brezhnev and me are a clear basis for agreement, and I have instructed our delegation to translate them into the formal ten-year agreement which can be signed by both governments. There are important technical provisions that have to be worked out, but I believe this can be done over the next few months.

I would not want to make any comments at this time about the outcome of the present negotiations, but there is still much work to be done in putting the basic provisions already agreed into treaty language and adding those details required to insure confidence in the agreement.

KISSINGER IN MOSCOW

SALT FOR ANGOLA?

Q. Can you tell us about the progress the Secretary is making in Moscow? Is the President encouraged or does the recent sharp exchange between Brezhnev and Kissinger indicate a deadlock?

A. Naturally, the Secretary is keeping the President informed of the progress of his trip. The President is committed to the conclusion of a good balanced agreement that is in our interest and in the best interest of all other countries as well. The continuation of unrestrained competition in strategic arms could seriously undermine world stability. Therefore, we are not undertaking these negotiations with the Soviet Union as a concession to them, but rather to try to secure a more stable and orderly nuclear relationship from which all will benefit.

As to your specific question on linking SALT to Angola, I would refer you to the Secretary's own words in his press conference of January 14: (See Attached page.)

SALT COMPLIANCE

Q: There have been a number of reports of Soviet violations of the SALT I agreements. Have we detected such violations?

A: We believe that both sides are complying with the provisions of the SALT I agreements. However, there are several instances of ambiguous activities relating to compliance with the agreements which we are examining closely. Certain of these activities may need to be clarified with the Soviet Union. The possible existence of ambiguous activities on both sides was taken into account in formulating the SALT I agreements which established the Standing Consultative Commission to consider ambiguous activities relating to compliance with the agreements.

Q: Have we called for a special session of the SALT Standing Consultative Commission to deal with possible Soviet violations of the SALT I agreements?

A: The charter of the Standing Consultative Commission calls for a minimum of two sessions a year, at mutually agreed dates. We have proposed that the next session begin in January, with the precise date to be established. At that time ambiguous activities relating to compliance with the SALT I agreements could be discussed with the Soviets.

SALT AGREEMENT AND BREZHNEV VISIT

Q: Yesterday on Meet the Press Secretary Kissinger said that prospects for a SALT agreement "within the next months" is good and added that 90% of the negotiation is substantially completed with only two or three issues remaining to be resolved. What are the prospects for a Brezhnev visit this year? Could the visit slip into 1976? Would he come for a visit without a SALT agreement to sign?

A: We have maintained all along that General Secretary Brezhnev would visit the United States following the successful conclusion of a SALT agreement. As the Secretary said yesterday, two or three issues remain and prospects for concluding an agreement "within the next months is good." Beyond that, we cannot conjecture the possible dates for concluding the negotiations or a visit by Brezhnev subsequent to that.

SALT

Q. Will you or Secretary Kissinger meet with Soviet leaders soon to negotiate a SALT Agreement?

A. There is no plan for a Presidential meeting now, but Secretary Kissinger will, of course, continue his discussions with Soviet officials if there is a prospect of movement in the negotiation. We have no specific plan to announce yet.

Q. Do you expect a SALT Agreement in the near future? Or will it have to wait until 1977?

A. A great deal depends on what the Soviet Union is prepared to do. I am not under any specific deadline, but I am certainly prepared to conclude an agreement if a good agreement can be negotiated.

If we reach a good agreement, I am certainly prepared to submit it to our Constitutional process and defend it.

SALT

Q: Senator Jackson says he does not like the agreement because it leaves advantages in throw weight for the Soviets and does not provide for any reduction in numbers of strategic weapons. Also, he raises the question of whether there were any secret agreements. Can you comment on these points?

A: I am hopeful that when Senator Jackson has an opportunity to study the agreement carefully he will recognize that it is in our interest and fully protects our military and security needs. We have the option, if we conclude that it is necessary, to increase the throw weight of our ICBMs. We can do this within the terms of the agreement.

As for reductions, we agreed that there will be new negotiations on that no later than 1980-81. I should also point out that the levels, or ceilings, to which we agreed are well below the capabilities of our two countries. The Soviets will actually have to reduce their present forces somewhat under the agreement.

There are no secret agreements.

SALT - FURTHER REDUCTIONS

Q: Several Senators (Kennedy, Mondale, Mathias) have said that we should go back to the Soviets and renegotiate lower levels than in the Vladivostok agreement. Do you agree?

A: The Vladivostok Agreement resulted from the five years of detailed and difficult negotiations we have undertaken in SALT since November 1969. The levels in that agreement were a key part of those negotiations and represent a major step in the process of significantly reducing strategic forces. The Agreement also provides for follow-on negotiations for further reductions. We expect such negotiations to be referred to in the final agreements and have them commence at the earliest possible time after the Vladivostok agreements are completed.

We view the resolution of Senators Kennedy, Mondale and Mathias as supporting the Vladivostok Agreement. We welcome this constructive action which will help achieve the objectives of that Agreement and which will serve as a guideline for further arms control negotiations upon completion of the Agreement. The work of the three senators is an excellent example of how Congress and the Executive can cooperate to advance the national interest.

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I would not want to make any comments at this time about the outcome of the present negotiations, but there is still much work to be done in putting the basic provisions already agreed into treaty language and adding those details required to insure confidence in the agreement.

- Q: What is the Department's reaction to the Jackson proposal to designate 700 older strategic systems which will not be modernized during the life of a SALT II agreement?
- A: The Department always considers seriously proposals made by Members of Congress. Senator Jackson's proposal will be given serious consideration.

Concerning the on-going negotiations in Geneva on implementing the Vladivostok Agreement, the Administration has made clear its firm belief that we must successfully complete the negotiations before going on to further measures.

We consider the Kennedy/Mathias/Mondale Resolution a helpful contribution, and we have already made it clear that we look forward to commencement of follow-on negotiations aimed at reductions in the level of strategic systems as soon as possible following conclusion of a SALT II agreement based upon Vladivostok. But an insistence on legislative proposals which go beyond Vladivostok will be counterproductive to this effort.

~~SECRET/SENSITIVE~~ XGDS

JACKSON ON SALT

APRIL 21

SALT

Q: Does the tabling of a draft SALT Treaty by the United States indicate that the US and USSR are close to concluding negotiations on a new strategic arms agreement?

A: Early in March the US SALT Delegation tabled a draft treaty which was consistent with the provisions of the Vladivostok accord. While there are still some important technical provisions which remain to be resolved, I am hopeful that this can be done over the next few months.

SALT

Q: What is the status of the SALT negotiations? Are you still optimistic about conclusion of a new SALT agreement?

A: The formal SALT negotiations are currently in recess. They will be reconvening in Geneva on July 2.

We are making progress toward a new SALT agreement based on the outlines agreed at Vladivostok in December. There are a number of technical problems which remain to be resolved.

As you know, SALT was one of the topics which Secretary Kissinger discussed with Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko during their recent meeting in Vienna. There was a thorough discussion of the outstanding issues, and both sides are now reviewing their positions in light of these exchanges. I am confident we will be able to find solutions to the outstanding problems.

SALT

Q: What are the issues which are holding up completion of a SALT agreement?

A: The unresolved issues are highly technical in nature dealing with unification, what weapons are to be counted in totals and similar issues.

Tad Szulc Article on SALT

Q: Tad Szulc, in a recent New Republic article, says we were "had" on the SALT agreements, that the Russians are violating the agreement widely, and that many "loopholes" were left in the agreements. Can you comment?

A: We know of no Soviet violation of existing agreements, and we have found no "loophole." Of course, in agreements this complicated, ambiguities arise. This was foreseen at the time the agreements were signed, and the Standing Consultative Commission (SCC) was set up to deal with such situations. To date, the SCC has been very successful. Most of the issues raised by either side have been resolved, and we are continuing our discussions on the remainder.

SALT

Q: Will the Vietnam collapse have any impact on our strategic relations with the Soviet Union, in particular on the SALT agreement which is supposed to be signed at the next Summit?

The SALT negotiations have been in continuous session since late January. The two sides will be recessing this week and reconvening early in June.

Both sides have tabled the texts of draft treaties. While there are important differences which remain to be resolved, I am confident that this can be done in the coming months.

I will be reviewing carefully the status of the SALT negotiations during the upcoming recess.

ON Friday
Q: The New York Times carries a story ~~this morning~~ in which the Pike Committee is reported to have subpoenaed a number of documents relating to alleged differences within the Administration over Soviet compliance with the SALT I agreement. The article also alleges that a double bookkeeping system was used for counting Soviet and U.S. strategic systems. Could you comment on the story.

A: I have seen the story. It is unfortunate and somewhat puzzling that the Committee thought it necessary to take the rather extreme measure of issuing a subpoena without following the normal approach that has been successfully exercised throughout the Committee's investigation. There is no record that the Committee has ever asked the White House for this information. While the information is classified, it has been briefed to appropriate oversight committees. On the matter of alleged double bookkeeping, ^{as informed by my national security} this charge is totally without foundation, and had the Committee cared to ask, it is probable that the matter could have been resolved in discussions. The Administration remains willing to discuss this matter with the Committee.

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