

IAC
Brussels

July 4, 1974

Henry

Have you ever made an assessment of what the Nuclear World will look like in (say) 10 years Time & ~~whether~~ technically the world will be safer or at greater risk? At the moment we are being immersed in immediate negotiations. I would like to know what you think the world will be like (in a technical sense) for my grandchildren.

Jim



MEMORANDUM

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Completely Outside the System

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

CONFIDENTIAL

September 21, 1974

*Tab A
retyped*

DEX 2 to NAC of UN

MEMORANDUM FOR:

SECRETARY KISSINGER

FROM:

JAN M. LODAL *NML*

SUBJECT:

Reply to Callaghan Question

During the NAC meeting of July 4 in Brussels, Callaghan passed you a note (Tab B) which asked for your technical assessment of what the nuclear world will look like in ten years, and whether it will be safer. I have prepared a reply (Tab A) which you may want to pass to Callaghan during your breakfast meeting with him in New York next Tuesday.

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LN 10/15/02



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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Dear Jim:

During the NAC meeting of July 4 in Brussels you continued your practice of not asking me easy questions. You passed me a note which asked for my assessment of what the nuclear world will look like in 10 years time and whether, technically, the world will be safer or at greater risk.

How the nuclear world develops from now to 1984 will depend on a multiplicity of political and technological factors which will be subject to control only to a limited extent. Whatever optimism I have in viewing the future I obtain largely from the belief that these factors have positive, stabilizing aspects, as well as aspects which will tend to place the world at greater risk. Simply put, our task will be to strengthen the stabilizing aspects and inhibit the destabilizing ones.

I address briefly four factors which I believe are especially relevant to your question:

1. US-Soviet Balance. The status of the US-Soviet strategic competition will no doubt continue to be a major determinant of the degree of danger in the world of 1984. Whether this competition is brought more fully under control will depend on progress in SALT over the next few years. The ABM Treaty has made a major, if often overlooked, contribution to strategic stability. It has essentially eliminated the operational significance of moderate numerical advantages in strategic weapons by either of the sides. However, there will remain a danger derived in part from political perceptions of numerical gaps and from perceived gaps between first and second strike capabilities. MIRV capabilities are of central importance in this context. If we have not reached an agreement by 1977 to replace the five-year Interim Agreement on offensive forces, we will see an explosion in the number of warheads, launchers, and technology. This will be a much less stable and incredibly more complex world, in which it is possible that opportunities for nuclear warfare will exist which

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NAC MEMO, WASHDC, STATE DEPT, CONCLUSIONS

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were unimaginable only a few years ago. This is one of the major concerns driving us to the 1985 SALT agreement announced at the Moscow Summit, which we have previously discussed.

2. Other Nuclear-Weapon States. While I would not presume to speak for the UK, I do not expect that over the next ten years we will see destabilizing nuclear developments from either the UK or the French. By the end of the coming decade, the PRC will almost certainly have deployed a number of ICBM's and SLBM's capable of reaching the U.S. From my government's standpoint, this would not necessarily be a stabilizing development, although the Chinese may be forgiven if they have a somewhat different view on this subject.

3. Proliferation. We will be very lucky indeed if nuclear proliferation, including the Indian steps, does not put the world at significantly greater risk over the next decade. I can take solace only from several indicators which lead me to believe there is still time to fashion -- with the UK and others -- an effective non-proliferation policy:

-- Many nations with an incentive to undertake such programs may not be able to acquire in the near-term the necessary capacity to do so.

-- Nuclear materials and equipment essential to the production of nuclear weapons will still be available only from a limited number of suppliers who will hopefully oppose proliferation.

-- Political and security disincentives for nuclear weapons decisions will continue to exist in many important non-nuclear states, and many states with advanced capabilities may not choose to exercise the nuclear option for political, security, and legal reasons. We may still be able to dissuade the Indians from building an operational weapon.

3. Technology. This is an area which we can perceive only vaguely beyond a decade. Indeed, this necessarily restricted vision has determined the duration of the 1985 SALT agreement toward which we will now strive. However, there is nothing on the technological horizon which will alter the stabilizing advantage of strategic offensive weapons over strategic defensive weapons, including ABM's and ASW.

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The accelerating spread of nuclear technology is an ill omen for future stability. However, as I noted, nuclear materials and equipment essential to the production of nuclear weapons will continue to be available from a limited number of suppliers.

Putting the above together gives me sufficient optimism for a safe world, and fright of a world at much greater risk, so that I will continue striving to bring nuclear technology under control. I am certain that you share my hopes and concerns and look forward to your further thoughts on the subject.

Warm regards,

Henry A. Kissinger

The Right Honorable James Callaghan, M. P.
Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs
London, England

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