THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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May 25, 1982

NATIONAL SECURITY DECISION
DIRECTIVE NUMBER 36

U.S. APPROACH TO START NEGOTIATIONS - II

This Decision Directive supplements NSDD-33 and provides additional guidance on the U.S. approach to START.

Interim Restraints

The United States will not depart from current policy with respect to existing arms control agreements at this time. At the same time, we must recognize that continuing current policy prompts the argument that we are complying with SALT II and should, therefore, ratify it, even though it is seriously flawed. In addition, we must keep in mind that continuing our current policy may present problems for certain U.S. force modernization options, particularly for M-X basing.

The following amplification of policy is provided to deal with the above considerations:

-- As we seek to achieve a more stable nuclear balance at reduced levels of force, the United States will continue its policy of taking no actions that would undercut existing agreements as long as the Soviet Union shows equal restraint.

-- This policy, however, consciously recognizes the fact that SALT II is not an acceptable foundation for a final, equal, and verifiable arms reduction agreement between ourselves and the Soviet Union. For reasons cited on many occasions in numerous fora, we believe it would be a major mistake to attempt to formalize the SALT II agreement's high ceilings and serious inequalities.

-- At the same time, increased nuclear stability at reduced force levels is the most basic U.S. objective. In particular, protecting the survivability of our ICBM force is an essential prerequisite to maintaining our security at reduced levels of forces and has consistently been a goal in previous negotiations. We believe that actions necessary to ensure the survivability of our ICBM force are fully consistent with existing agreements.

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~~Review May 25, 2002~~
~~Classified and Extended by William P. Clark~~
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by S. Tilley, National Security Council

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This description of U.S. policy, which expands upon the current formulation, is approved as the U.S. position on interim restraints. It is an explanation of, rather than a change from, previous policy.

Phases and Agreements

The United States has proposed a phased approach to the START negotiations. Whether the results gained through this approach will be implemented in a series of agreements or in a single, comprehensive agreement will depend upon the progress made, and the condition of the ongoing negotiations as the first phase of these negotiations is completed. If the Soviets were to agree to the terms we have proposed for Phase I, then we would be willing to implement such an agreement. However, we should take no action to restrict our flexibility by prejudging the decision to be taken at that time.

Treatment of Mobile ICBMs

The U.S. will make no proposals with respect to mobile ICBMs in its initial position. We should continue to explore the possibility of drawing a distinction between the degree of transportability needed for deceptive basing of M-X and the full mobility associated with an SS-16-type ICBM. If that distinction is supportable, then we should reconsider the issue of proposing a ban on SS-16-type ICBMs. This review should take into consideration both current and projected Soviet deployments of such systems, and the potential contribution that a small mobile ICBM could make to improving the survivability of the U.S. ICBM force.

Air-Launched Cruise Missiles (ALCMs)

The U.S. should not seek special limits on ALCMs themselves. ALCM carriers should not be subject to restrictions beyond those applicable to other heavy bombers. The U.S. should not propose limits on maximum ALCM loadings per bomber in our START proposal.

Access to Flight-Test Data

The U.S. should seek a ban on all telemetry encryption in flight tests of START-limited systems. Additional measures to ensure access to relevant flight-test data may also be required. Decisions on additional measures should be made after the provisions of a START agreement becomes more clear. Such decisions should balance the value of additional information for monitoring Soviet START-limited activities against the impact of reciprocal measures on U.S. flight-test practices.

Missile Flight Tests

The U.S. should not seek a limitation that would set an annual quota of missile flight tests.

Bomber Pre-Launch Survivability

One potentially useful limitation appears to be a ban on "depressed trajectory" SLBM flight tests. However, because of verification problems and the possible implications for certain U.S. systems (e.g., flight tests of TRIDENT II), we should not propose a ban on such testing, pending further review.

Limits on Air Defense

We do not envisage air defense limitations in a START agreement. We should, however, use the lack of constraints on Soviet air defenses to achieve preferential treatment of U.S. bombers and their weapons in START.

Limits on Civil Defense

Although the Soviet Union has a considerably more active civil defense program than the U.S., we should not seek civil defense limitations in START. Such limitations would be very difficult to negotiate or verify and could inhibit U.S. civil defense programs.

Limits on Antisubmarine Warfare (ASW) Capabilities

As there appears to be no compelling U.S. security requirement for ASW limitations, they should not be included in our START proposal.

Additional Work

The START Interdepartmental Group will provide for NSC review by June 4 its recommendations on a package of complementary collateral constraints, on the treatment of ICBM refire and reconstitution, and on any other items upon which it feels guidance is required.

Ronald Reagan