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by J. Saunders, National Security Council

The U.S. Position: Nuclear and Space Talks (U)

Four weeks ago, at the Nuclear and Space arms control talks in Geneva, the Soviet Union presented a counterproposal in response to the detailed proposal for offensive arms reductions introduced by the United States last March. The fact that the Soviets have finally put forward a counterproposal that seems to accept the principle of deep reductions is certainly a welcome development. It underscores the soundness of the basic U.S. negotiating position. It also demonstrates that our strategy of pursuing this principled position in a patient and determined manner, complemented by the solidarity demonstrated by the NATO Alliance over the last five years, has paid off. (U)

My upcoming meeting with General Secretary Gorbachev provides a rare opportunity to take a fresh start at improving the overall U.S./Soviet relationship. In this context, the presentation of a positive Soviet arms reduction counterproposal could not have come at a better time. Unfortunately, the Soviet counterproposal that was presented is both flawed and largely self-serving. It contains a number of elements which are clearly unacceptable both to the United States and to our Allies, and which limit the utility of this counterproposal in moving both the U.S. and the Soviet Union towards an equitable and verifiable arms reduction agreement. The Soviet offer is designed to present the promise of significant, equitable reductions, but that promise is left unfulfilled. Their counterproposal is carefully crafted to result in unbalanced reductions which would permit the Soviet Union to retain major advantages in weapons, ballistic missile throw-weight, and nuclear delivery systems. (U)

For example, the Soviet counterproposal would limit U.S. systems that are critical to the defense of our allies in NATO and Asia, without limiting comparable Soviet systems that threaten these same allies and friends. The Soviet offer also would block needed U.S. strategic force modernization critical to maintaining the credibility of our deterrent, while allowing ongoing Soviet modernization programs to proceed. Finally, it continues to demand a halt to the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) research in spite of the fact that the Soviets themselves have been deeply involved for years in strategic defense programs, including advanced research in many of the very same areas now being explored by our SDI program. (U)

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Nevertheless, I am determined to ensure that every opportunity to achieve equitable and verifiable reductions in the size of existing nuclear arsenals is exploited fully and to the best of our ability. Our challenge is to attempt to find, within this flawed Soviet counterproposal, seeds that we can nourish in the hope of promptly adding needed momentum to serious give-and-take on the critical issues facing us in the Geneva negotiations. Therefore, I have decided that the U.S. delegation should present the following U.S. proposals to the Soviet delegation prior to the end of the current round of the Nuclear and Space Talks. (U)

Strategic Arms Reductions (U)

In the area of strategic arms, Ambassador Tower should make it clear that while the previous U.S. negotiating position remains on the table, the United States agrees with the objective of a fifty percent reduction in strategic offensive forces. However, the United States cannot agree to a Soviet approach which would have the U.S. abandon its allies and our legitimate right to SDI research. Also, the U.S. cannot agree to apply the principle of fifty percent reductions in ways that are destabilizing. Therefore, the U.S. proposes the following approach which appropriately builds upon the fifty percent reduction principle contained in the Soviet counterproposal. (C)

Strategic Weapons. With regard to strategic ballistic missile warheads, ballistic missile throwweight, and Air Launched Cruise Missiles (ALCMs), the U.S. is prepared to propose the following: (U)

-- Reductions to an equal limit of 4,500 on the number of warheads carried on U.S. and Soviet ICBMs and SLBMs, which would result in roughly a fifty percent reduction in this category of weapons. (C)

-- Reductions to an equal limit of 3,000 on the number of warheads carried by U.S. and Soviet ICBMs. While higher than the current U.S. proposed limit of 2,500 on such warheads, which the U.S. continues to prefer, this would represent roughly a fifty percent reduction from the current level of warheads on Soviet ICBM forces. (C)

-- A fifty percent reduction in the maximum overall strategic ballistic missile throwweight possessed by either side (in this case by Soviet ICBMs and SLBMs). (C)

-- Contingent upon the fifty percent reductions in the warheads on ICBMs and SLBMs represented by the 4,500 warhead limit, and upon a fifty percent reduction in Soviet ballistic missile throwweight, the U.S. would accept an equal limit of 1,500 on the number of long-range ALCMs carried by U.S. and

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Soviet heavy bombers. This would represent roughly a fifty percent reduction in the number of ALCMs currently planned by the United States. (C)

Given the sizeable and unconstrained Soviet defenses against the U.S. retaliatory bomber force, the United States cannot accept any direct limit on the number of gravity bombs and Short Range Attack Missiles (SRAM) carried by heavy bombers. The U.S. also cannot agree to a proposal which aggregates under one common limit ballistic missile warheads, which arrive on their targets in minutes largely unhampered by defenses, and ALCMs, which take hours to arrive at their targets and face sizeable defenses enroute. However, if the Soviet Union were to accept the U.S. proposed 4,500 limit on the warheads carried on U.S. and Soviet ICBMs and SLBMs and the U.S. proposed 1,500 limit on long-range ALCMs carried by U.S. and Soviet heavy bombers, this would result in a reduction in the overall number of ballistic missile warheads and ALCMs to an equal total of 6,000. (C)

Strategic Nuclear Delivery Vehicles. With respect to the numbers of U.S. and Soviet ICBMs, SLBMs and heavy bombers, the U.S. would propose the following: (U)

-- While still preferring the lower level associated with our previous position, the U.S. could accept reductions to an equal limit on the number of U.S. and Soviet strategic ballistic missiles (ICBMs and SLBMs) of between 1250 to 1450 on both sides. This would result in a forty to fifty percent reduction from current, higher Soviet ballistic missile levels. (C)

-- In the context of an appropriate agreement, the U.S. could accept a further reduction from the previous U.S. proposed equal limits on U.S. and Soviet heavy bombers of 400 to an equal limit of 350 heavy bombers on each side. This 350 limit would result in roughly a forty percent reduction from U.S. SALT accountable heavy bomber levels. (C)

As with the case with strategic ballistic missile warhead and ALCM limits, and for the same basic reasons, the U.S. cannot agree to a proposal which aggregates under one common limit ballistic missiles and heavy bombers. However, if agreement were reached in the 1,250 to 1,450 range on U.S. and Soviet ICBMs and SLBMs and on a 350 limit on U.S. and Soviet heavy bombers, this would result in a reduction in the number of ballistic missiles and heavy bombers to an equal total between 1,600 and 1,800. (C)

Other Elements. In addition to the above, the following additional elements should also be placed on the negotiating table: (U)

-- Given their especially destabilizing character, the U.S. proposes a ban on all new heavy strategic ballistic missiles. The U.S. would intend this ban to include a ban on all

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modernization of the existing Soviet SS-18 ICBM force. (C)

-- Given the increasing difficulty posed in verifying the number and status of mobile ICBMs, and in determining with certainty that any type of mobile ICBM carries only one warhead, the U.S. also proposes a ban on all mobile ICBMs. (C)

-- To ensure that the reductions proposed above promptly take effect, the U.S. delegation should reiterate the U.S. "build-down" proposal. In doing so, the delegation is authorized to adjust the level of ballistic missile warheads to which the build-down would proceed to 4,500 to synchronize this element of the build-down mechanism with the approach towards strategic ballistic missile warheads outlined in this decision. (C)

Having presented the above approach, Ambassador Tower should inform the Soviet delegation that we are prepared to consider Soviet counterproposals based either upon the new elements which we will have just presented or on our previous position, which remains on the table for consideration by the Soviet Union. (C)

Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (U)

In the area of intermediate nuclear forces, Ambassador Glitman should make it clear that the previous U.S. negotiating position remains on the table. He should also restate the U.S. preference for a U.S./Soviet zero-zero outcome and the U.S. continued commitment to ultimately achieving the total elimination of the entire class of land-based LRINF missiles. At the same time, as one potential interim step towards this goal, he should propose an approach containing the following elements: (C)

-- The United States would be prepared to cap U.S. LRINF missile deployments in Europe at their December 31, 1985, level (140 Pershing II and Ground Launched Cruise Missile (GLCM) launchers) in return for Soviet agreement to reduce Soviet SS-20 missile launchers within range of Europe to that same launcher number. (C)

-- Under this approach, there would be freedom to mix systems of the types deployed by December 31, 1985 (for the U.S., Pershing II and GLCM; for the U.S.S.R., the SS-20) with the exact mix, which could result in an equal warhead level on U.S. LRINF missiles in Europe and SS-20s within range of Europe of 420-450, a subject for discussion. (C)

-- The Soviet Union would also be required to reduce the number of SS-20 launchers in Asia (outside range of Europe) from December 31, 1985, levels in a manner proportional to Soviet SS-20 launcher reductions within range of Europe. (C)

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-- The end result would be that both sides would be limited to an equal global LRINF missile warhead number. (C)

-- Appropriate constraints should also be applied to Shorter-range INF (SRINF) missiles. (C)

-- Should the Soviet Union raise the issue of limitations on LRINF aircraft, the U.S. delegation is authorized to respond that the U.S. would be prepared to discuss constraints on comparable LRINF aircraft on both sides in the context of an appropriate agreement. (S)

In presenting the above approach, the U.S. delegation should protect the following:

-- the U.S. right to relocate U.S. LRINF missiles permitted under the agreement within Europe as decided by the U.S. and its NATO allies;

-- the U.S. right to equal global LRINF missile warhead numbers, whether or not this right is immediately exercised;

-- the U.S. right to convert Pershing II missiles reduced under the terms of the agreement to Pershing IB missiles; and,

-- the U.S. right to match Soviet Shorter-range INF (SRINF) missiles in range of Europe and on a global basis, as appropriate. (TS)

Having presented the above approach, Ambassador Glitman should inform the Soviet delegation that we are prepared to consider Soviet counterproposals based upon the new elements presented or on our previous position which remains on the table for consideration by the Soviet Union. (C)

Defense and Space (U)

In the Defense and Space area, Ambassador Kampelman should once again make it clear that the U.S. is committed to pursue the U.S. SDI program as permitted by, and in full compliance with, the ABM Treaty. In addition, the following elements should be added to the U.S. position in the Defense and Space area: (U)

-- Propose and seek Soviet commitment to explore with the U.S. how a cooperative transition to more reliance on defenses could be accomplished. (C)

-- Propose that the Soviet Union join the U.S. in an "open laboratories" initiative. Under this initiative, both sides would commit to provide, on a regular and reciprocal basis, briefings on each others strategic defense research programs and

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opportunities to visit associated research facilities and laboratories. (C)

Compliance and Verification (U)

In addition to the above proposals in the individual negotiating areas, Ambassador Kampelman should stress the criticality of the related issues of verification and compliance with existing agreements to progress in reaching any future agreements. In this context, he should note that the U.S. continues to insist that Soviet Union take the necessary steps to correct their current instances of non-compliance with existing agreements. He should also suggest that the Soviet Union alter certain of their current practices which hamper U.S. verification of their compliance. One such step which the Soviet Union could take would be to alter its current telemetry encryption and revert to practices with regard to telemetry in use at the time of the signing of SALT II. (C)

Presenting the U.S. Proposals (U)

The U.S. proposals outlined above should be initially tabled at the Nuclear and Space Talks in Geneva by Ambassadors Kampelman, Tower and Glitman before the end of the current round. The U.S. delegation should seek Soviet agreement to extend the current round sufficiently to permit a full presentation of the new U.S. proposals and to permit the Soviet delegation to seek additional information as needed to ensure that the Soviet Union fully understands these new U.S. proposals prior to the U.S. and Soviet delegations departing Geneva. (S)

Handwritten signature: Richard A. Glitman

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