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February 2, 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE SECRETARY OF STATE
THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: SALT Negotiating History

Attached at Tab A is a description of the SALT TWO negotiating history with an emphasis on the exchanges that have taken place since Vladivostok.

The SALT community as a whole is not aware of many of the exchanges which took place in the "backchannel." Since this channel essentially involved private communications between Presidents Ford and Nixon and General Secretary Brezhnev, it is recommended that tight restrictions be placed on any distribution of the negotiating history.

Zbigniew Brzezinski

Declassified/Released on 2/6/92
under provisions of E.O. 12356
by S. Tiley, National Security Council

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SALT TWO NEGOTIATING HISTORY

From the SALT ONE Agreements to Vladivostok

The SALT TWO negotiations commenced in Geneva the fall of 1972 with the objective of negotiating a permanent agreement limiting offensive weapons to replace the Interim Agreement. The first negotiating session was essentially exploratory in nature with the US arguing for a permanent agreement based on: (1) equal aggregates of ICBM and SLBM launchers and heavy bombers, (2) equal ceilings on ICBMs and on ICBM throw weight, and (3) achievement of these limits through reductions. In contrast, the Soviets sought to convert the Interim Agreement (IA) signed in May of 1972 into a permanent agreement, expanding its content to include strategic systems not covered by the IA such as "strategic" bombers and forward-based systems (FBS). They also proposed that the two sides assume obligations to exercise "restraint" in the deployment of new strategic weapon systems-citing Trident, B-1, SRAM, SCAD, Poseidon, and Minuteman III as US systems that should be "restrained," but not identifying similar Soviet programs.

At the second SALT TWO session in the spring of 1973, the US proposed a ceiling of 2350 on ICBM and SLBM launchers and heavy bombers along with a ban on cruise missiles of intercontinental range and a ban on air-to-surface missiles (ballistic and cruise) over 3000 km range. The Soviet proposal for FBS limits was rejected, but the US did propose a provision under which the sides would agree not to circumvent the agreement through the deployment of "non-central" systems. The Soviets rejected this approach at the 1973 Summit meeting in Washington.

At the third SALT TWO negotiating session in the fall of 1973, the Soviets tabled a draft agreement containing: (1) the IA limits on ICBMs, SLBMs, and ballistic missile submarines; (2) limits on strategic bombers including a ban on air-to-surface missiles equipped with nuclear warheads; (3) a proposal to permit MIRVs on an unspecified "portion" of each side's ICBMs and SLBMs; (4) a ban on new generations of strategic systems; and (5) a strict non-transfer provision.

By the end of 1973, the Soviet ICBM MIRV testing program was well advanced and US SALT analyses were focusing on ways to limit Soviet

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MIRV deployments. Of particular interest was the possibility of limitations based on MIRVed throw weight, a concept to which Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin had responded positively. At the SALT session which commenced in February of 1974, the US proposed equal limits on ICBM throw weight.

During Secretary Kissinger's visit to Moscow in March of 1974, the Soviets rejected our MIRV throw weight proposal and countered with an offer to accept an 1100-1000 disparity in MIRVed missiles as part of extending the Interim Agreement for three years. In April we offered through the backchannel to accept an 1100-850 US advantage in MIRV launchers as part of the three-year IA extension; however, the Soviets rejected this proposal and the June 1974 Summit failed to produce any new SALT agreement. However, the sides agreed at that time to focus their efforts on an agreement to expire in 1985 (and also agreed to cut the permitted ABM level on each side from two sites to one site).

The SALT session which took place in Geneva in the fall of 1974 was restricted to a discussion of principles for the 1985 agreement. At the same time, backchannel efforts focused on the issue of numerical limits on the numbers of strategic delivery vehicles and the issue of MIRV levels. In October 1974, in the backchannel the US proposed equal aggregates at a level of 2200 with a limit of 1320 MIRVed ICBMs and SLBMs, a ban on MIRVs on heavy missiles, and a limit of 250 on "heavy" systems, i. e., heavy bombers plus heavy missiles. This proposal also called for a ban on air-to-surface missiles over 3000 km and a modernization limit of 175 new strategic delivery vehicles per year. When Secretary Kissinger visited Moscow later in October, the Soviets offered to accept equal aggregates at 2400 at the end of 1985 if the US accepted a 2200 limit until that time. This set the stage for the Summit meeting in Vladivostok in late November.

Vladivostok and the Aide Memoire

At Vladivostok, President Ford and General Secretary Brezhnev agreed to a limit of 2400 on strategic delivery vehicles and a limit of 1320 on launchers for MIRVed missiles. They also agreed to continue the Interim Agreement bans on: (1) the construction of new ICBM silos and (2) the conversion of light ICBM launchers to heavy ICBM launchers.

There was also agreement that air-to-surface missiles (ASMs) of range in excess of 600 km would be counted in the 2400 aggregate; however, in the subsequent negotiation of language to be included in the Vladivostok Aide Memoire, it became clear that the two sides had differing interpretations of the agreement on ASMs. The Soviets argued that this limit applied to both cruise and ballistic ASMs and not ballistic ASMs alone as the US claimed. It was agreed to disagree and the Aide Memoire retained the ambiguous term "air-to-surface missiles."

The First Post-Vladivostok SALT Session

US efforts in the first post-Vladivostok SALT session in Geneva (which commenced in January of 1975) focused on the problem of verifying the 1320 MIRV limit with the US proposing a comprehensive set of collateral constraints to enhance MIRV verification.

To deal with the ambiguity with respect to which "air-to-surface missiles" over 600 km were going to count in the 2400 aggregate, the US took the position that this limit applied only to ballistic ASMs and furthermore, that there should be no limits on cruise missiles of any type (air-, sea-, or land-launched) in the new agreement. It was also decided that the Backfire should be included in the US list of heavy bombers to be counted in the 2400.

The Soviets took a strong stand against the need for special provisions to deal with MIRV verification, argued that both cruise and ballistic ASMs over 600 km should count in the aggregate, and rejected the US proposal to count the Backfire as a heavy bomber. They also proposed a limit of 600 km on all sea-launched cruise missiles.

The First Post-Vladivostok Backchannel

The first effort to resolve the MIRV verification, cruise missile, and Backfire issues at a higher level was a US initiative in the backchannel in May of 1975. In a message passed to the Soviets, the US argued strongly for the need for MIRV verification provisions and offered to exempt the SS-18 from our proposed MIRV collateral constraints provided MIRVed SS-18s were deployed only in designated complexes where all launchers would count as MIRVed. The message also sought a simultaneous solution to the cruise missile and Backfire issues by offering to ban all cruise missiles over 3000 km (air-, sea-, and land-launched)

provided the Soviets agreed to count all Backfires except those satisfying certain criteria. An example of those Backfires which might be excluded was provided (those operating with naval units based in the Southern USSR and not supported by tankers) in order to hint at a possible collateral constraints solution to the Backfire issue.

The May message also queried the Soviets as to their position on mobile missiles and hinted at a possible US interest in banning all mobile ICBMs (land-, air-, or sea-based).

Kissinger/Gromyko Meeting in July in Geneva

The next major development in SALT came in July when Secretary Kissinger met Foreign Minister Gromyko in Geneva. At that meeting, the Soviets made their first move toward accommodating the US view on MIRV verification by offering to count as MIRVed all missiles which had been tested with MIRVs even if the missile is deployed with a single RV. However, this concession was made contingent on US agreement to the Soviet position on cruise missiles (which remained essentially unchanged with the exception of a proposed ban on land-based cruise missiles of intercontinental range).

Gromyko also rejected the US backchannel proposal on Backfire, reaffirming the Soviet position that Backfire was not a heavy bomber. However, in a surprise move, Gromyko proposed that the deployment of land-mobile ICBMs be banned for the period of the agreement with development and testing of such missiles permitted to continue. He also brought up the issue of the permitted limit on increases in silo dimensions (whether both diameter and depth could be increased by 15 percent) and proposed a compromise limit of 32 percent on increases in silo volume. In another significant move, Gromyko offered to include a heavy ICBM definition in the new agreement provided such a definition was based on missile launch weight rather than throw weight as we had been proposing.

The Helsinki CSCE Meetings with Brezhnev

At the CSCE meetings in Helsinki in early August of 1975, the US proposed a resolution of the cruise missile and Backfire issues along the following lines:

-- Ban ALCMs over 3000 km on heavy bombers and over 600 km on aircraft other than heavy bombers. Ban sea-launched cruise missiles SLCMs over 1500 km. Ban intercontinental land-launched cruise missiles (LLCMs).

-- Permit 100 Backfires outside the aggregate for naval and peripheral missions but count all Backfires over 100 in the 2400 aggregate.

We also proposed a ban on ballistic missiles over 600 km on surface ships, a heavy ICBM definition based on throw weight and launch weight, and a 15 percent limit on increases in dimensions plus a 32 percent limit on increases in volume to deal with the silo dimension issue.

Brezhnev strongly defended the Soviet position and argued for the significance of the concessions which the Soviets had offered in Geneva in July. In response, President Ford defended the US position and hinted that we might go as low as 1200 km on SLCMs. There was no discussion of the mobile ICBM issue.

The September 1975 Meetings with Gromyko

When Gromyko came to the US for the opening of the UNGA in September of 1975, SALT discussions were held in Washington and New York. At the first meeting in Washington, we offered to reduce the maximum range for ALCMs on heavy bombers from 3000 to 2500 km and reduce the maximum SLCM range from 1500 to 1000 km. Gromyko's response was a reiteration of the Soviet position.

At the second meeting in New York, Secretary Kissinger presented a new proposal that had been worked out in coordination with Secretary Schlesinger. It maintained the US position on ALCM range limits but offered to place a limit of 300 on the number of heavy bombers equipped with ALCMs. In addition, it offered a combined solution on SLCMs and Backfire based on a numerical limit of 300 on: (1) FB-111s and SLCMs between 600 and 2000 km on the US side and (2) Backfires and SLCMs between 600 and 2000 km on the Soviet side.

Brezhnev's Rejection of the US September Proposal

In late October, Brezhnev responded to the US September proposal in a letter to the President. He totally rejected the US proposal in a strongly worded statement questioning the US commitment to a new SALT agreement. However, he offered to continue to work toward conclusion of such an agreement.

The January 1976 Moscow Discussions

In January 1976, Secretary Kissinger met with Brezhnev in Moscow. The initial US proposal at that meeting (summarized in Table I on p. 8) called for a ban on submarine SLCMs over 600 km (while retaining the right to deploy LLCMs and surface ship SLCMs out to 2500 km), including heavy bombers with 600-2500 km ALCMs in the 1320 MIRV limit and counting all Backfire produced after October of 1977 in the 2400 aggregate (which would have excluded about 120 Backfire).

The Soviets indicated that they could accept the US proposal for resolving the ALCM and submarine SLCM issues but rejected the US proposals on Backfire, LLCMs, and surface ship SLCMs. Brezhnev argued for a 600 km limit on these cruise missiles and offered to give assurances that the Backfire: (1) would not be given an intercontinental capability and (2) did not have an operational range in excess of 2200 km.

The US offered a counterproposal of a five-year agreement to cover those issues (Backfire, LLCMs, and surface ship SLCMs) on which the two sides disagreed. The proposed agreement would have limited Backfire to 275 aircraft and also provided for reductions in the aggregate to 2300 by October 1980. Brezhnev rejected the idea of a five-year agreement but offered to consider reductions to 2300 "or even lower" in a 1985 agreement. He also offered to accept the US proposal for a heavy ICBM definition based on throw weight and launch weight and limits on increases in ICBM dimensions.

The US February 1976 Proposal

In February 1976, the US made a new proposal (summarized in Table II on p. 9) based on wrapping up the basic Vladivostok provisions and the ALCM issue in a 1985 agreement and deferring the SLCM, LLCM, and issues to negotiations with a January 1979 deadline. Interim constraints on SLCM and land-based cruise missile testing and Backfire production had the objective of retaining the possibility of restrictive limits on these systems.

The February proposal was rejected by Brezhnev in a letter to President Ford in March and there have been no substantive SALT proposals by either side since then, although the February proposal was reiterated to Gromyko at the UNGA in September 1976 and again rejected.

Progress in Geneva

In spite of the breakdown in the higher level negotiations on the cruise missile and Backfire issues, progress was made in 1976 in Geneva on a number of important issues related to the Geneva Joint Draft Text (JDT). In particular, the two sides reached agreement on definitions for throw weight and MIRVs and treaty language for the ceilings on light and heavy ICBM throw weight and launch weight and increases in silo dimensions. There is also agreement that after entry into force of the agreement currently being negotiated, further negotiations on reductions will be undertaken.

TABLE I
JANUARY PROPOSALS

In January; in the course of Secretary Kissinger's trip to Moscow, the U.S. and the Soviet Union made the following package proposals:

	<u>U.S.</u>	<u>Soviet</u>
ALCMs on Heavy Bombers	Ban above 2500 km; count H. B. w/ALCMs in 1320	Ban above 2500 km; count H. B. w/ALCMs in 1320; B-1 counts as three
ALCMs on Aircraft Other than Heavy Bombers:	Ban above 600 km	Ban above 600 km
SLCMs on Sub-marines	Ban above 600 km	Ban above 600 km
SLCMs on Surface Ships	Ban above 2500 km; (1)* Count platforms in 1320 (2)* Limit of 25 platforms in 5-year agreement	Ban above 600 km
Land-Launched Cruise Missiles	Ban above 2500 km	Ban above 600 km
Backfire	(1)* Count in 2400 aggregate after October 1977 (2)* Limit of 275 in 5-year agreement	Assurances on maximum operational radius and inter-continental capability
Aggregate	(1)* 2400 (2)* 2300 by October 1980 with 5-year agreement	2300 or lower if cruise missile limits are accepted

* (1) Designates the U.S. position at the start of the Moscow discussions.
 (2) Designates the U.S. position at the conclusion of the discussions.

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TABLE IIFEBRUARY PROPOSALTHE VLADIVOSTOK AGREEMENT (TO LAST THROUGH 1955):

Vladivostok Provisions and
Geneva Joint Draft Text (JDT)

-- All provisions relating to Vladivostok agreed to
thus far in Geneva plus other agreed provisions.

MIRV Verification

-- Agreement that any missile whose booster has been
tested with MIRVs will be considered to be MIRVed.

Throw Weight

-- Ceiling on the throw weight and launch weight of
heavy and non-heavy ICBMs (agreed in Geneva).

ALCMs

-- Ban ALCMs with range over 2500 km; restrict ALCMs
over 600 km to deployment only on heavy bombers;
count heavy bombers equipped with 600-2500 km ALCMs
in the 1320 total.

Reductions

-- Reduction in the aggregate to some level below 2400.

INTERIM AGREEMENT (TO LAST THROUGH JANUARY 1979):

Submarine SLCMs

-- Limit testing of submarine SLCMs to a maximum range
of 2500 km; ban deployment over 600 km.

Surface Ship SLCMs

-- Limit testing of surface ship SLCMs to a maximum
range of 2500 km; ban deployment over 600 km.

Land-Launched Cruise Missiles
(LLCMs)

-- Limit testing of LLCMs to a maximum range of
2500 km; ban deployment over 600 km.

Backfire

-- Prohibit acceleration of Backfire beyond the current
and agreed rate; ban on improvements in Backfire
capability.