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December 20, 1971

*12/20/71*

To: The Secretary  
The Under Secretary

From: *PM* Ronald I. Spiers

SALT - Principal Negotiating Issues

SALT has been in session in Vienna for one month; there will be no meetings between December 23 and January 4. Ambassador Smith and most of the US Delegation will return to the US during that time. The USSR has agreed to this break, but there will be no formal recess.

Although the USSR acceded to our demand that there be serious discussion of offensive limitations as a first priority in Vienna, significant differences remain with respect both to ABMs and the offensive freeze. These are capsulized in this memorandum, along with the major arguments both of us use to support our respective positions.

ABMs

Levels and Area - The Soviets have advanced two ABM proposals this session: their earlier September 7 proposal (which we have again rejected), and a modification put forward December 15. The US continues to stand on the 2-or-1 proposal, which would allow either side to protect its NCA or two ICBM fields. The Soviets reject this, allegedly because of the two-to-one advantage to the US in ABM launchers and defended areas. They also have suspicions about why the US wants to protect ICBMs but would not permit the USSR to do so (since we both know that the Soviets would keep their Moscow defense rather than tear it down and defend ICBMs). Despite initial Soviet rejection of the idea that it is desirable to defend ICBMs, our arguments seem to have convinced

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them that ICBM defense can contribute to strategic stability; and both their proposals provide--at least for them--for protection of NCA and some ICBMs.

The September 7 USSR proposal would allow each side to protect its NCA with 100 launchers/interceptors within a radius of 150 kilometers (as opposed to our 100 kilometer figure) from the center of Moscow and Washington respectively. The US could protect one ICBM site and the USSR an equal number of ICBMs. (The Soviets have told us that they would plan to deploy defenses at three ICBM sites.) Two hundred launchers/interceptors would be permitted for ICBM protection.

The December 15 Soviet proposal would let the USSR defend its NCA, but would not permit the US an NCA defense. It would allow the US to protect one ICBM field, and permit the Soviets to protect half as many ICBMs as the US. An equal number of launchers/interceptors (150) would be permitted each side. Their September 7 proposal would permit the USSR to defend an equal number of missiles as the US. The Soviets argue, therefore, that their December 15 proposal is a move towards the US since it would only allow the USSR to protect half as many missiles as the US. We note that the September 7 proposal would allow the US an NCA while December 15 does not. The Soviets would argue that this is not germane because the US does not contemplate an NCA in any case.

Radars: MARCs and OLPARs - Radars continue to be a very sticky issue. The US would limit Modern ABM Radar Complexes (MARCs) within the permitted ABM area to a specific number that seems reasonable to us in terms of the size system to be permitted. The Soviets contend that a simple geographic limitation is sufficient on ABM radars. The US contends that unlimited ABM radar deployment within the permitted area could provide a base for ABM coverage broader than that required for NCA protection; e.g., a heavy regional defense. The Soviets argue this is not possible because of launcher limitations.

On other large phased-array radars (OLPARs) outside the permitted deployment area, we have tried to get the

USSR to agree to a requirement for mutual agreement before either party deploys such high-powered, sophisticated radars since they might perform ABM functions. The Soviets have firmly resisted limitations on OLPARs on several grounds. They contend that a general treaty undertaking not to provide ABM capability to radars outside permitted ABM deployment areas would be honored. They note that they have accepted the provisions of the Joint Draft Text placing controls on early warning radars and prohibiting SAM upgrade. They further argue that their proposed treaty provision--with which we agree--that neither side will deploy ABM systems for a territorial defense reinforces these points. The Soviets have stressed that they would not accept radar system limitations that could impinge on their air defense capabilities, relating this need to third-country threats (i.e. China). They assert that the specificity of our proposed radar controls could have this effect.

Future Systems - We have proposed, and the USSR has not as yet accepted, that each side undertake not to deploy ABM systems using devices other than current ABM system components to perform the functions of these components. The Soviets contend, in essence, that this amounts to trying to put a box around something that does not exist. Academician Shchukin has, however, indicated informally that prohibition of possible future ABM systems is something that might be treated in the Joint Standing Commission.

Period and Form of Agreement - It is agreed that the ABM agreement shall be of unlimited duration. The Soviets have pressed us to put the ABM agreement in treaty form, and there is a disposition to support the US Delegation recommendation that we agree to this. The Soviets have not as yet agreed to our proposal that the ABM agreement provide for the right of withdrawal if the parties do not reach agreement on more comprehensive limitations on strategic offensive arms within a specified time. The Soviets have argued informally that such a provision would tend to undercut ab initio the unlimited duration provision. This, it has been implied, would create problems within the Soviet bureaucracy. It is further argued that such a withdrawal provision is superfluous since the ABM Joint

Draft text already contains a withdrawal provision which could be used if either side feels that its supreme interests are jeopardized.

### Offensive Force Freeze

#### Coverage of Freeze

Submarines - The Soviets have not been willing to include a freeze on new ballistic missile submarine construction, as we have proposed. They argue that SLBMs were not part of the May 20 understanding. They say that SLBMs (as opposed to the ballistic missile submarines themselves) are a legitimate topic for follow-on negotiations, but because of the advantage which accrues to the US from forward basing, that SLBMs will have to be considered in the context of the whole FBS issue. (Some of our own studies indicate the Soviets would have to have a force of 70 submarines to provide the same "on-station" time that we get from 41: presumably the Soviets are smart enough to make the same analysis.)

"Soft" ICBM Launchers and Mobile ICBMs - Although the Soviets have proposed a draft agreement calling for a freeze on ICBM silo launcher construction as of July 1, 1972, their proposal would place no limitation on either mobile or "soft" ICBM launchers. They have argued that since missiles in silos constitute the source of our principal concern, their proposal should be acceptable to us. They further note that neither side would wish to deploy "soft" launchers because of their extreme vulnerability. The Soviets have indicated that they do not wish to have mobile ICBMs included even in a follow-on agreement.

#### ICBM Modernization

MLBMs - The US position calls for a freeze on the number of launchers for modern large ballistic missiles (MLBMs) deployed after 1964. The Soviets have now agreed that it would not be permissible to convert "light" missiles into "heavy" ones during the freeze. They have not agreed to our proposal to prohibit depth and interior diameter increases in allowed silos.

The Soviets assert that national verification means would be sufficient to monitor this undertaking. They have resisted our contention that precise definitions are needed in order to assure that older large missiles, such as the SS-7, are not replaced by new larger missiles and to avoid ambiguities in interpreting the agreement. The lack of a precise definition of an MLBM (which the US has defined as greater in volume than 70 cubic meters for missiles deployed after 1964) could cause difficulties if the Soviets were to deploy a new ICBM having a somewhat larger volume than 70 cubic meters as a replacement for a "light" ICBM. The Soviets have said that the US definition gives them problems, but have suggested as an alternative that future missiles could be defined in terms of the size of existing missiles.

Replacement - Both sides agree that there should be no restrictions on modernization of existing ICBM silos except to reinforce the prohibition on converting small ICBMs to large ICBMs. The Soviets have agreed that ICBM relocation would be precluded during the freeze, eliminating the concern that new construction could be called modernization. Thus, the remaining issue on the ICBM silo freeze relates to the restrictions required to give us assurance that modernization does not involve an increase in the MLBM level. It should be noted in this connection that the Soviet draft proposal permits "replacement" (e.g., reconstruction) of existing ICBM silo launchers.

#### Date of the Freeze

The US proposal is that the freeze on new ICBM and SLBM construction enter into effect as of last July 31 and for MLBMs on December 31, 1971. The Soviet proposal is that the ICBM freeze go into effect as of July 1, 1972. We do not know how many new ICBM silos the Soviets may intend to start between now and next July 1. The Soviets have hinted, however, that the total number of launchers may be no larger than it was as of July 31, 1971.

Duration of the Freeze

The draft Soviet agreement on offensive armaments states that it will remain in force while active negotiations on limiting strategic armaments are pursued, but no longer than for a period of 1½-2 years. The US position is that either party shall have the right to withdraw from this Interim Agreement if it deems its supreme national interests are jeopardized, after providing a six-month notice of intention to withdraw. This difference can probably be resolved once the major issues are disposed of.

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There is to be a meeting of the Verification Panel on December 23 at 3 p.m., at which outstanding issues on SALT will be discussed. The US Delegation will be arriving in Washington late afternoon December 22.

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