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STATEMENT OF POSITION OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF ON THE THREE-ENVIRONMENT NUCLEAR TEST BAN TREATY

1 1. Upon receiving the final draft on the three-environment 2 nuclear test ban treaty recently negotiated in Moscow, the 3 Joint Chiefs of Staff began a comprehensive review of the 4 terms of this treaty in order to determine what effect its ratification would have on the security of the United States. 5 6 In this review, they deliberately set aside all considerations 7 of former positions taken on other occasions on the subject 8 of a test ban treaty and focused their attention on this 9 particular troaty at this particular point in time. As a 10 base of departure for their appraisal, they first established certain criteria to assist them in evaluating from a military 11 12 point of view the acceptability as to content and timing of 13 a limited test ban troaty which would prohibit nuclear test 14 explosions in all environments excepting underground.

2. It was the judgment of the Joint Chiefs of Staff that 15 16 four criteria or conditions would have to be met for a limited 17 test ban treaty to be compatible with the national security. 18 First, the United States should not accept limitations on 19 testing if the Soviet Union had or could achieve a significant advantage in any militarily important area of nuclear weapon 20 21 technology which, under the treaty, could not be overcome by the United States. Second, recognizing that the USSR could 22 be expected to take advantage of any reasonably safe opportunity 23 for clandestine testing, the Joint Chiefs determined that a test 24 25 ban treaty could be accepted only if successful cheating would 26 have no seriously adverse effect on the relative balance of

military power. Third, it was considered important that withdrawal from the treaty should be uncomplicated, allowing the United States to withdraw without undue delay upon acquiring reasonable evidence of a treaty violation or in the event our national interests were imperiled. Fourth, if the conditions of criteria one and two were not completely met, the treaty must convey adequate compensatory advantages elsewhere.

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3. As a closely related matter, but not as a criterion for 8 the treaty itself, the Joint Chiefs of Staff noted the impor-9 tance for the United States, if it embarks on this treaty, to 10 continue underground testing at a rate to insure continued 11 progress in nuclear technolizy. They were equally impressed 12 with the need for the United States to maintain the readiness 13 and the determination to resume atmospheric testing promptly. 14 Finally, they believed that account must be taken of the 15 dangers of relaxed military effort by the US and our allies; 16 hence, that ratification of the treaty should be accompanied 17 by evidence of a clear intent to maintain and improve the 18 military posture of the West. 19

4. Having determined the foregoing conditions of acceptability, 20 the Joint Chiefs of Staff then undertook to measure against 21 them the specific terms of the three-environment test ban 25 treaty drafted recently in Moscow, To assist them in their 23 deliberations, they consulted with those officials who have 24 particular responsibilities and competence in this field. These 25 were officials from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, 26 the Department of State, the Atomic Energy Commission including field laboratories, the Central Intelligence Agency, the Arms 28 Control and Disarmament Agency, the President's Special 59 Assistant for Science and Technology, and from technical 30 agencies of the military establishment. 31

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5. With regard to the current relative position, the Joint	1
hiefs of Staff reached the following conclusions:	2
a. Evidence indicates that the USSR is ahead of the United	3
States in the high-yield technology,	4
in weapons effects knowledge derived from high-yield nuclear	5
explosions and in the yield/weight reties of high-yield	6
devices; that the USSR is about even at the intermediate	7
range and that the USSR lags somewhat	8
behind the United States at yields less than about	9
	10
b. In the antiballistic missile field, there is evidence	11
that the Soviets are further advanced than the United States.	12
However, development of the US system does not depend on	13
atmospheric testing and hence this treaty will not signi-	14
ficantly influence any imbalance that may exist.	15
c. In the field of tactical nuclear weapons, particularly	16
in the field of very low-yield weapons, the United States	17
is probably ahead in the quality and diversity of systems	18
although the superiority in quality may be questioned since	19
the USSR may have conducted very low-yield tests which were	20
never known to us.	21
6. It is important to emphasize that the superiority under	22
discussion in the preceding paragraphs refers essentially to	23
technological superiority. It does not take into account	24
such superiority as derives from numbers of weapons, variety	25
of delivery systems and the magnitude of nuclear plant and	26
stockpile. Hence, technological superiority is only one aspect	27
of the net superiority which must take into account all of	28
these factors. As to net superiority in ability to inflict	50
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tactical nuclear wark whereas the Soviets have developed a

substantial mid-range ballistic missile capability.

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- They concluded that the United States would not be able to overtake the present advantage which the USSR probably has in the high-yield weapons field, whereas the Soviets, by underground testing, probably could retrieve in time any lead which sides could achieve an ABM but one with less desirable characteristics than would be the case if additional atmospheric tests were conducted.
- 3. There are other disadvantages which apply in varying degree to both sides. For example, knowledge of weapons effects is incomplete at best and although knowledge could be gained from underground testing, knowledge which only testing in the prohibited media could provide would be denied. Also, there would be no opportunity to conduct environmental tests of current weapons or of those which might be acquired in order to verify their performance.
- 9. Such disadvantage as might accrue to the United States under conditions of honest fulfillment of treaty conditions would be further aggravated if the Soviets augressfully should cheat by illicit explosions in the atmosphere, underwater, or in outer space. By cheating, they might carry out investigations of weapons effects in the field of ballistic missiles, ballistic missile defense, ASM, and high-yield technology (the latter only if the testing were done in outer space). However, the dangers of detection and the cost and difficulty of testing in outer space would tend to impose severe restrictions upon such clandestine testing. Other clandestine tests in the atmosphere or underwater, depending upon their size, would

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involve a fairly high probability of detection by our con-	1
ventional intelligence or our atomic energy detection system.	2
Moreover, the Joint Chiefs of Staff consider the resulting	3
progress which the Soviets might make clandestinely to be a	4
relatively minor factor in relation to the overall present and	
probable balance of military strength if adequate safeguards	6
are maintained.	7
10. The Joint Chiefs of Staff believe that the withdrawal	8
provision requiring 90 days notice following a unilateral US	9
decision provides a satisfactory means of escape in case we	10
beliate our national interest is being threatened. They are	11
impressed, however, by the possibility of an abrupt abrogation	
by the Soviets, followed by a comprehensive series of atmos-	12
pheric teaus.	13
	14
11. Recognizi I the foregoing disadvantages and risks, the	15
Joint Chiefs of Staff believe that they can be reduced through	16
ertain safeguards. These safeguards include:	17
a. The conduct of comprehensive, aggressive, and con-	18
tinuing underground nuclear test programs designed to add	19
to our knowledge and improve our weapons in all areas of	20
significance to our military posture for the future.	21
b. The maintenance of modern nuclear laboratory facilities	22
and programs in theoretical and exploratory nuclear tech-	23
nology which will attract, retain and insure the continued	24
application of our human colerators were	

n of our human scientific resources to these 25 programs on which continued progress in nuclear technology 26 depends. 27

c. The maintonance of the facilities and ressuress 28 necessary to institute promptly nuclear tests in the 29 atmosphere should they be deemed essential to our national ЭŌ security or should the treaty or any of its terms be 31 abrogated by the Soviet Union. 30

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d. The improvement of our capability, within feasible	1
and practical limits, to monitor the terms of the treaty, to	0 2
detect violations, and to maintain our knowledge of Sino-	3
Soviet nuclear activity, capabilities, and achievements.	4
12. Having considered the technological and withdrawal	5
aspects of the proposed treaty and the safeguards we should	6
take, the Joint Chiefs of Staff then took note of the effect	7
of the treaty in the broad field of international relations	8
and of world-wide military strategy. They recognized that	
considerations of nuclear technology and weaponry were not	9
the sole determinants of the merits of the treaty; that if it	10
would contribute to a further division of the Sino-Soviet Bloc,	11
this result would be a major political achievement with	
important and favorable military to a serievement with	13
important and favorable military implications. If this	14
treaty attracts signatories representing the vast majority	15
of the nations of the world on both sides of the Iron	16
Curtain, it should make an important contribution toward	17
the restraint of the further proliferation of nuclear	18
reapons and the reduction of causes of world tension.	19
oth of these advantages, if achieved, should contribute	20
o the fundamental objective of the US armed forces,	21
amely the deterrence of war and the maintenance of peace	22
n honorable terms. These possibilities are of such	23
mportance to the United States that they offset the	24
oresceable technological disadvantages noted above.	25
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13. In conclusion, the Joint Chiefs have reached the	1
determination that while there are military disadvantages	2
to the treaty, they are not so serious as to render it .	5
unacceptable. In the past, the JCS have not regarded as	L
important the attainment of weapons in the	5
range from which the United States will be deburred by the	6
treaty. They feel that the types and numbers of megaton	7
yield weapons available to us now or in the future (up to	8
could give us an adequate capability in the	9
high-yield weapon range. Under the treaty, both sides could	10
make about the same technical progress in the ABM field	13
although the Soviet may possess nuclear blackout information	13
not available to the United States. If the Soviets are to	1
catch up with the United States in the low-yield field, par-	14
ticularly in numbers, they will be subjected to a major	15
additional expenditure of national resources which are already	16
under heavy strain.	17
14. The broader advantages of the test ban treaty have led	18
the Joint Chiefs of Staff to conclude that 1t is compatible	19
with the security interests of the US and to support its	20
ratification. If we can contribute to a further division	51
of our enemy, that advantage will compensate for foresecable	22
fluctuations in nuclear technology. The most serious reserva-	23
tions of the Joint Chiefs of Staff with regard to the treaty	24
are more directly linked with the fear of a euphoria in the	25
West which will eventually reduce our vigilance and the	20
willingness of our country and of our Allies to expend con-	27
tinued effort on our collective security. If we ratify this	28
treaty, we must conduct a vigorous underground testing	29
program and be ready on short notice to resume atmospheric	30
backing the should absorbe a second	- 31

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and maintain modern nuclear laboratory facilities and programs.	1
Finally, we must not for a moment forget that militant Communism	2
remains committed to the destruction of our society.	3
15. Having weighed all of these factors, it is the judgment	4
of the Joint Chiefs of Staff that, if adequate safeguards are	5
established, the risks inherent in this treaty can be accepted	6
in order to seek the important gains which may be achieved	7
through a stabilization of international relations and a move	8
toward a peaceful environment in which to seek resolution of	9
our difference	10