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Nuclear Arms Control: Getting From Some To More

A Case Study by Captain Richard C. Davis

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Nuclear Arms Control

Getting From Some to More

Submitted to the Senior Seminar of the
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United States Department of State

By Captain Richard C. Davis, U.S. Navy
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Summary

As currently conducted, the U.S.-Soviet negotiations in Geneva on nuclear arms control amount to arms control as theater. The U.S. seeks to soothe Western publics who want an arms control agreement but do not trust the Soviet Union. The USSR seeks to divide Western governments from each other, and to divide Western publics from their governments.

It can be agreed that negotiations without agreements are useful. The two sides are talking, there is little public pressure in the West for an agreement, Western governments have freedom to act in their interests without the artificial constraints of an arms control agreement, and a breakthrough could occur.

On the other hand, the U.S. and the USSR must coexist on a small planet. Neither can ignore the other. They are locked in an irreconcilable political conflict which neither dares use war to resolve. Their situation makes it incumbent upon them to search for means of smoothing the rough edges of the relationship to preclude war. Arms control agreements are one such means. They can reduce uncertainty, enhance understanding, and be used to signify the mutual accommodation required for mutual survival. They are but one of several means, and they are easy victims of other tensions in the U.S.-Soviet relationship. Nevertheless, agreements are worth pursuing if only because some limits to the nuclear competition are better than none; because rules are better than anarchy.

There is risk in the pursuit of arms control agreements, but it is not the risk of slipping to nuclear inferiority. Forty years of post-war history indicate that neither the U.S. nor the USSR will permit the other to gain superiority, with or without arms control agreements. The real risks are to the personal political fortunes of leaders in Moscow and Washington. Their constituencies are divided between those who want and those who oppose arms control. Getting an agreement requires that each must compromise to accommodate, both to those who want and to those who oppose arms control. Obtaining constituent support for inevitably imperfect agreements requires spending enormous political capital. The proposal both sides have made to reduce to 6000 weapons offers a great opportunity. It remains to be seen whether the leaders in Moscow and Washington can muster the political will to find a way to seize the opportunity.

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II. Arms Control Negotiations As Theater

The nuclear and space talks in Geneva are no longer concerned with controlling weapons. On the U.S. side they are a means of soothing American and allied publics. These publics fear nuclear weapons and want them eliminated. Simultaneously, these publics expect the Soviets to try to cheat on an arms control agreement. 1 The negotiations in Geneva permit Western publics to persuade themselves that arms control agreements are being pursued. The absence of agreements permits Western publics and governments to avoid having to decide whether or not to trust the Soviets. In these respects, continued negotiations without agreements seem to be the best of all possible worlds.

On the Soviet side the nuclear and space talks serve two purposes. They are a means to divide Western governments from one another, and they are a means of dividing Western publics from their governments. The Soviets make proposals that are attractive to some governments and repulsive to others, and accuse governments before their publics of bad faith and lack of seriousness.

Both the U.S. and the Soviet Union make in public proposals which each knows is unacceptable to the other. When these proposals are rejected, each accuses the other of intransigence.

The Soviet Union is a closed society. No one in the West has access to the deliberations among the small group of decision makers in the Politburo. Consequently, no one in the West knows with certainty whether Soviet leaders are willing to accommodate to Western concerns to get an arms control agreement. Informed opinion in the West may be found on both sides of the argument. Some believe the Soviets would like arms control agreements in order to constrain American technology, to bound the American threat and thus make Soviet force planning easier, and to ease the burden on the Soviet economy. Others believe the Soviets do not want arms control agreements because they hope to gain politically useful military superiority by a combination of their own efforts and Western reluctance to match continued Soviet force building. 2

Soviet leaders profess to believe that nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought. 3 They also profess their belief that nuclear weapons should be reduced in number, limited and eventually eliminated, and that space should not be militarized. In the meantime, the Soviets (like the U.S.) are building new nuclear weapons delivery systems. The Soviets (unlike the U.S.) are interfering with U.S. efforts to verify Soviet compliance with the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaties (SALT I and SALT II). In the world outside arms control, but within which arms control must be pursued, the Soviets continue to press for political and ideological objectives antithetical to those of the West, although perhaps less vigorously, and certainly less successfully than during the late 1970s.

Because actions speak louder than words, these Soviet actions cause Western leaders and publics to be suspicious of the sincerity of Soviet words.

Soviet leaders profess to have their own reasons to be suspicious of the West. In the face of professed Western desires for arms control, the Soviets point to U.S. efforts to develop and deploy large numbers of nuclear armed, land attack cruise missiles to be launched from land, air, and sea. They point to U.S. deployment in Europe of Pershing II intermediate-range ballistic missiles (P-II IRBMs), and ground-launched cruise missiles (GLCMs). These missiles can strike targets in the Soviet Union, and thus add warheads to the classic U.S. strategic forces (inter-continental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), and heavy bombers) limited by SALT I and SALT II. The Soviets point to the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative, whose research efforts, either in testing or deployment, eventually will contravene the U.S. Senate ratified Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty. Finally, the Soviets point to French and British nuclear force modernization plans. These plans, if carried through to deployment, will raise the total of French and British nuclear warheads aimed at the USSR from about 150 today to well over 1000 sometime in the 1990s. 4

Thus, on both sides there exists a high level of suspicion and distrust of the other side's sincerity in its professed desire to achieve an arms control agreement.

One may ask if arms control as theater, that is negotiations that never reach agreement, is good. After all, the two sides are talking, which is probably better than not talking. The process of talking gives each side the opportunity to learn something about the other side's view, which is better than ignorance. There may be a breakthrough some day if one of the two sides makes an offer the other finds attractive. There is no great pressure among publics for an agreement, thus no need to reach agreement for the sake of agreement, whether or not the agreement is really useful. Each side is more or less free to take steps, hopefully rational and prudent, that serve its national security interests. Thus, without being cynical, one might conclude that arms control negotiations by themselves are useful even if they do not lead to agreements.

There is a risk in the West that publics will disavow governments they believe not to be sincere in seeking to curb the nuclear arms race. But this is balanced to some degree by public perceptions that the Soviets are cheating on current agreements and probably would try to cheat on future agreements, which breeds a feeling that arms control agreements are not of much use anyway.

There is a risk that Western governments may be divided between those who want "real" negotiations and an agreement, and those who are content simply to continue the process of negotiations until or unless a "real" agreement can be reached. But this is balanced to some extent by the facts that the Soviet Union presents a real threat, which helps to bind Western governments, and that Soviet proposals thus far have not been universally attractive to all Western governments. 5

If Soviet leaders sincerely want an arms control agreement, there is a risk that they will tire of arms control as theater and break off negotiations. But this is balanced by the adverse publicity they would receive for

breaking off, and by the fact that they could at any time move negotiations forward by making an attractive proposal.

Finally, there is a risk that in the absence of mutually agreed formal limits on nuclear forces one of the sides will take actions unilaterally to serve its national security needs that excite genuine apprehension on the other side. This could lead to heightened tension, increased uncertainty, and unforeseen additions to force postures that might have been avoided by an arms control agreement. Some analysts have pointed out, for example, that a transition from today's offense-dominated strategic forces to a future force posture that contains a mix of offensive and defensive forces could, in the absence of mutually agreed steps, induce great uncertainties in the calculations of both sides.⁶ Such uncertainties could lead to the hostilities that were such a prominent feature of the Cold War. It is conceivable that such an atmosphere could provide a setting wherein miscalculation sets off armed conflict. But this risk is balanced by the fact that even in the Cold War East and West were able to manage themselves so that armed conflict involving U.S. and Soviet forces did not occur.

Given all of these considerations, it is reasonable to ask why the U.S. should try to reach agreements to limit nuclear weapons.

II. Arms Control Agreements in the American-Soviet Relationship

It is a truism to say the future is unpredictable, but it is true. It is also true that the future is unpredictable whether or not the U.S. and the Soviet Union reach an arms control agreement. One of the classic objectives of arms control is to reduce the risk of war. If an arms control agreement makes the future force structures of the U.S. and the Soviet Union more predictable, then it reduces one uncertainty that could be a contributor to the political hostility that causes war. But as long as the U.S. and the Soviet Union hold opposed views of the nature of man and the state, and as long as each is prepared to use military force to prevent the other from imposing its views by military force, the possibility of war between them will exist. There is no easy escape, either by arms control or by nuclear disarmament (which cannot eliminate the knowledge of how to build nuclear weapons), from the dilemma the U.S. and the Soviet Union face: both pursue irreconcilable goals; each can destroy the other if the use of military force to achieve their goals gets out of hand.

As a consequence of their mutual dilemma, the U.S. and the Soviet Union face an objective fact: they must handle their competitive relationship in such a way as to permit themselves to continue to exist on the same small planet.

Arms control agreements are one means of handling the competitive relationship. Such means include agreements on handling incidents at sea, agreements on handling trade and finance, and agreements on handling regional issues which might embroil the U.S. and the Soviet Union in armed conflict. Such agreements seek to smooth rough edges, to reduce uncertainties, to clear up misunderstandings, and to prevent situations that could be the cause of wars.

Thus, arms control agreements are not an end, but a means. They are, however, a means which is affected by the climate of U.S.-Soviet relations, and that climate in turn is affected by Soviet actions. Soviet actions in Africa and Afghanistan in the late 1970s were widely perceived in America as Soviet attempts to take advantage of detente to gain unilateral advantage. These actions poisoned the well, and caused President Carter to ask the Senate to suspend ratification action on the SALT II treaty. Similarly, Soviet actions which appear to indicate disregard for the obligations of current arms control agreements discredit the arms control effort, and make it more difficult for the U.S. to enter into future agreements.

Whether or not arms control agreements are important enough to be insulated from other parts of the U.S.-Soviet relationship is irrelevant. Given the pluralistic U.S. domestic political system, arms control cannot be insulated. It is a high profile target for domestic constituencies whose opinions differ on what U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union ought to be.

Despite all of the problems associated with arms control agreements, they are worth pursuing. The U.S. and the Soviet Union cannot escape the necessity of dealing with one another; each is simply too prominent for the other to ignore. Arms control agreements are a useful means for each to deal with the other. The nuclear threat each poses to the other cannot be eliminated, but it can be constrained. Some limits can be set on the competition, and some limits are better than none.

This said, the question becomes what can be done to move toward an agreement.

IV. What an Arms Control Agreement Must Accomplish

There are five fundamental concerns which an arms control agreement must reconcile, three of them American, two of them Soviet.

The U.S. is concerned about the first strike implications of the Soviet ICBM force. There are 308 Soviet SS-18 ICBMs, each carrying 10 warheads. This is more than sufficient to place two warheads on each of the 1027 U.S. ICBM silos, and to target U.S. heavy bombers on the ground, U.S. ballistic missile submarines in port, and selected U.S. command and control points and military-related industrial facilities, but not U.S. cities. Following such an attack, the U.S. would have only a few surviving submarines and bombers to retaliate. These survivors would have several thousand weapons, enough to destroy the USSR as a modern industrial nation. But if the U.S. launched a retaliatory strike, the USSR would have many thousands of remaining weapons on ICBMs, SLBMs, and bombers, not used in the first strike, which would be used to destroy American cities. Some have speculated that this Soviet first strike capability, which the U.S. cannot presently match, would give the Soviets the ability to coerce the U.S. in a crisis. 7

The U.S. has sought without success to negate this Soviet first strike capability since the SALT I negotiations. Now the U.S. is looking to the Peacekeeper ICBM, the Small ICBM (SICBM), labeled "Midgetman" by the press, and the Trident II SLBM to match the Soviet ability to strike

hardened targets, and to the mobile SICBM and strategic defenses to make it more difficult for the Soviets to hit American ICBMs.

An arms control agreement must reduce American concern about a Soviet first strike capability.

The U.S. is concerned about Soviet compliance with an arms control agreement. The Soviet record on compliance with past agreements is not unblemished. An arms control agreement must provide for effective monitoring and verification of Soviet behavior, and must include penalties for noncompliance. Moreover, past Soviet non-compliance must either be corrected, or the U.S. must be given off-setting compensations.

Finally, the U.S. is concerned that arms control agreements not disrupt its relations with allies, particularly those in NATO and Japan. These allies have no love for nuclear weapons, but do, on the whole, consider them an important strand in the web of relationships that persuade the Soviets that war in Europe would serve no useful purpose. Consequently, these allies are made uncomfortable by talk of eliminating nuclear weapons.

Although they consider nuclear disarmament unrealistic, the allies are in favor of arms control agreements as an instrument for helping to manage East-West relations. The allies depend upon American nuclear weapons to counter Soviet nuclear weapons, but they want to bound the U.S.-Soviet nuclear competition. Unfortunately, Soviet and American nuclear weapons are not the only ones to be dealt with. British and French nuclear weapons capable of striking the USSR are relatively few now, but will grow significantly in number by the 1990s. If U.S. and Soviet weapons are to shrink to 6000 on each side in the 1990s, as both Gorbachev and Reagan have proposed, something over 1000 French and British weapons will be a significant threat in Soviet calculations.

An arms control agreement must recognize Soviet concern for French and British arms, and U.S. concern about maintaining alliance unity.

The USSR presumably is concerned by America's technological dynamism. It is concerned about the Strategic Defense Initiative as a wild card in the strategic competition, and about the implications of tactical applications of SDI technology in the conventional forces competition. It is concerned about the surprise attack implications of stealth technology applied to bombers, tactical aircraft, and cruise missiles. And it is concerned by the economic implications of competing in new areas of technology.

An arms control agreement must reduce Soviet concern about U.S. technology.

Finally, the USSR must be concerned about the incipient U.S. first strike capability growing out of U.S. strategic weapons modernization. Both the U.S. Peacekeeper (ICBM) and the Trident II submarine launched ballistic missile (SLBM) will be able to attack hardened Soviet ICBM silos and command and control points. Americans like to think that SLBMs produce stability because they cannot be targeted by a Soviet strike, hence are an obvious second-strike force. Simultaneously, American analysts

create scenarios in which Soviet SLBMs are used in a Soviet first strike. Soviet planners must consider "worst-case" scenarios. One of these is a deliberately planned U.S. attack using Peacekeeper and Trident II to eliminate Soviet ICBMs, SLBMs in port, and bombers on the ground. The weak Soviet retaliation, restricted to surviving SLBMs, would be met by highly effective U.S. strategic defenses. If the Soviets did retaliate, the U.S. would use its mobile small ICBMs and bombers to attack all remaining forces in the USSR. As a consequence, the U.S. would win and the USSR would lose.⁸

The Soviets, of course, do not intend to let such a scenario come about. To prevent it they are making their new ICBMs mobile, they are adding more and better warheads to their SLBMs, and, inevitably, they will deploy strategic defenses to counter U.S. deployment of strategic defenses.

An arms control agreement must reduce Soviet concerns about a U.S. first strike even as it must reduce U.S. concerns about a Soviet first strike.

V. Getting an Agreement

It is not difficult to construct the outlines of an arms control agreement. Many American analysts have done so.⁹ This author has outlined the terms of a possible agreement and its rationale in Appendix A. The difficulty is in finding the political will, both in Moscow and Washington, to take the risk of making the necessary compromises and accommodations.

The risks do not exist so much in the U.S.-Soviet nuclear relationship. Neither the U.S. nor the USSR will permit the other to gain military superiority within an arms control agreement, any more than either will absent an agreement. The risks are those faced by political leaders in domestic politics. Both American and Soviet political leaders face constituencies who oppose arms control. Both would have to spend enormous political capital to get the meaningful agreement each says it wants. It is obvious that American political leaders must face the people who elect them. But the removal of Khrushchev is proof that Soviet political leaders can be made to pay if they get out of step with their supporters.

It is by no means clear that the political will to get an agreement exists either in Washington or in Moscow. What is clear is that the proposals each has placed on the negotiating table thus far are not acceptable to the other. Consequently, the negotiations are deadlocked, and each side is playing arms control as theater.

To make progress toward an agreement will require that either President Reagan or General Secretary Gorbachev make a proposal that recognizes and accommodates the fundamental concerns of each of their countries, while protecting the national security interests of each.

Enormous difficulties lie in the way, not the least of them the problems of verifying compliance and punishing noncompliance. The two leaders face personal political risk both in taking the first step and in creating support for the compromises each will have to make in subsequent steps. Yet, as

Nixon, Ford, Carter and Brezhnev demonstrated, where the will exists, a way can be found to reach agreement.

The proposal on both sides to reduce strategic nuclear warheads to 6000 creates a tremendous opportunity to place significant limits on the nuclear competitive aspect of the American-Soviet relationship. Time will tell whether either leader has the will to grasp the opportunity.

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Notes

1. U.S. public opinion polls indicate that 80 percent of the respondents want the U.S. and the USSR to agree to arms limitations. These polls also indicate that a similar percentage do not trust the USSR.
2. Samuel B. Payne, Jr. discusses the differences and the similarities in the Soviet leadership's views of Soviet foreign policy and arms control policy in his book The Soviet Union and SALT (The MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1981).
3. Most recently, Gorbachev himself in the joint U.S.-Soviet statement issued by he and President Reagan after their November 1985 Summit. The Washington Post, "Text of Joint U.S.-Soviet Statement," Friday, November 22, 1985, p. A15.
4. George M. Seignious II and Johnathan Paul Yates, "Europe's Nuclear Superpowers," Foreign Policy, No. 55, Summer 1984, pp. 40-53. Eric J. Grove, "Allied nuclear forces complicate negotiations," Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, June-July 1986, pp. 17-23.
5. Ironically, the Soviet proposal to go to zero intermediate-range missiles in Europe, which would mean withdrawing the U.S. Pershing II ballistic missiles and ground-launched cruise missiles, was not welcomed by West European governments. William Drodziak, "Allies Uneasy About Losing Missiles," The Washington Post, Monday, February 17, 1986, p. A27.
6. The U.S. position is that a "cooperative transition, jointly managed by the United States and the Soviet Union... can contribute to stability...." Paul H. Nitze, "U.S. Strategic Force Structures: The Challenge Ahead," Current Policy, No 794, U.S. State Department Bureau of Public Affairs, p. 2.
7. Classic statements of this thesis are: Paul H. Nitze, "Assuring Strategic Stability in an Era of Detente," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 54, No. 2, January 1976, and "Deterring Our Deterrent," Foreign Policy, No. 25, Winter 1976-77. An opposing view is in John D. Steinbruner and Thomas M. Garavin, "Strategic Vulnerability: The Balance Between Prudence and Paranoia," International Security, Vol. 1, No. 1, Summer 1976.
8. Georgi A. Arbatov and Willem Altmans, The Soviet Viewpoint (Dodd, Mead and Company, New York, N. Y., 1981), pp. 101, 116, and 135. Colonel-General Nikolay Chervov, General Staff of the Soviet Armed Forces, in a Moscow television news conference, quoted in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, July 26, 1985, Daily Report: Soviet Union, p. AA2.
9. For example: Harold Brown and Lynn E. Davis, Nuclear Arms Control Choices, SAIS Papers in International Affairs No. 5. (Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1984).

Appendix A: The Outline of an Arms Control Agreement

This appendix contains two parts. The first part gives the terms of a possible arms control agreement. The second part describes the rationale for the terms. In its whole the agreement seeks to encompass the concerns and needs of both the U.S. and the USSR.

I. Terms of the Agreement

The U.S. and the U.S.S.R. agree that:

- The numerical limits prescribed herein will be achieved no later than ten years from the date the treaty is ratified.

- Reductions in each year must be equal on both sides in terms proportional to the total number of weapons each must eliminate over the ten year period.

- Each side is permitted no more than 6000 ballistic missile warheads and weapons on long-range bombers.

- Each side is permitted no more than 60 percent of its 6000 weapons (3600) on ICBMs or SLBMs.

- Each side may have as many of its 6000 weapons on long-range bombers as it wants.

- Long-range bombers include the Soviet Bear, Bison, and Blackjack, the U.S. B-52 and B-1, future types of equivalent or superior capability, and any aircraft equipped for ALCMs capable of a range in excess of 600 kilometers.

- Air to surface ballistic missiles are prohibited.

- No long-range bomber will be equipped to carry more than twenty weapons of any kind, singly or in combination.

- The number of weapons each type of long-range bomber may carry will be as agreed to by the two sides.

- All MIRVed ICBMs will be eliminated. The U.S.S.R. must eliminate its SS-18s before it begins eliminating other types.

- The U.S. will suspend MX deployments. When Soviet SS-18s decline to a number equal to deployed MX, the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. will eliminate MX and SS-18s together.

- The U.S. will suspend development of the Trident II (D-5) SLBM. The U.S.S.R. will suspend development of any SLBM not already deployed. (This provision is intended to eliminate an ICBM silo-destroying SLBM warhead on either side.)

- No mobile ICBM launcher will be permitted. Those that exist will be destroyed as quickly as practical over and above the required annual weapon destruction.

- Both sides have the right to deploy one new, single-RV, silo-based ICBM with physical dimensions no larger than is agreed to by the two sides.

- Warheads on U.S. P-II and GLCM launchers deployed within range of the U.S.S.R. will count in the 6000 weapon limit. If P-II and/or GLCM launchers are withdrawn from Europe, the U.S. will have the right to add weapons to its "strategic" force to maintain its 6000 weapon limit.

- Warheads on Soviet SS-20s within range of any NATO nation can be no higher than those deployed on British and French SLBMs and French IRBMs.

- Warheads on Soviet SS-20s not within range of Europe will be reduced to the number deployed when the U.S.S.R. walked out of the INF negotiations in November 1983, after having proposed a freeze on SS-20s deployed outside range of Europe.

- There will be numerical equality between Soviet nuclear-capable ballistic and ground-launched ballistic missile launchers in the "European-zone" of the U.S.S.R. with a range in excess of 200 kilometers and equivalent systems deployed in Europe by NATO nations except for U.S. GLCM counted in the 6000 strategic weapon total.

- Limits on nuclear-capable aircraft that are not long-range bombers will be dealt with in a subsequent treaty.

- Nuclear-armed, land-attack SLCMs are banned. Tactical anti-ship SLCMs are limited to no more than the combat radius of the U.S. Navy carrier-based A-6 attack aircraft.

- ASAT systems are prohibited. Existing ASAT capabilities will be destroyed. No ASAT tests will be conducted during the negotiations leading to a ratified treaty.

- Laboratory research on ballistic missile defense is permitted. Except for ABM systems defined in Article II of the ABM Treaty, tests of BMD systems outside the laboratory are prohibited. Test, development, and deployment of BMD systems other than those defined in Article II of the ABM Treaty will be permitted only by amendments to the ABM Treaty in accordance with Articles XIII and XIV of that Treaty.

- Soviet defensive systems not in accordance with the ABM Treaty or this proposed treaty, as determined by on-site inspection by an international team must be dismantled and destroyed. Such systems could include the radar at Krasnoyarsk, and the laser facilities at Sary Shagan Missile Test Center.

- Verification provisions will provide for national technical means, non-interference with such means, on-site inspections, and "any other additional verification measures."

- The U.S. will ratify the Threshold Test Ban Treaty (TTBT) and the Peaceful Nuclear Explosions Treaty (PNET) simultaneously with ratification of the treaty proposed here.

- The U.S.S.R. and the U.S. will apply to the TTBT and the PNET without further negotiation the verification provisions agreed to in the treaty proposed here, and will agree to follow-on negotiations to amend the TTBT and PNET as necessary to ensure the application of these verification provisions specifically to the two treaties.

II. Rationale for the Terms of the Agreement

The agreement is shaped to serve a variety of U.S. and Soviet interest, concerns, and objectives. These are described below.

No specific limit is prescribed for strategic nuclear delivery vehicles (SNDVs), or for INF delivery vehicles. This follows the logic of permitting weapons to be spread over a larger number of delivery vehicles to reduce first-strike concerns. In practice, this could mean constructing up to 3,600 ICBM silos in order to have 3,600 warheads on 3,600 single-RV ICBMs. If the U.S. or the U.S.S.R. do not wish to construct additional ICBM silos, they can choose to use SLBM warheads and bomber weapons to fill the gap between existing silos and the 6,000 weapon limit.

For example, if the U.S. decided to have 1000 ICBM silos, each with a single-RV ICBM, and 450 INF warheads in Europe, it would have 4,550 weapons which it could deploy on SLBMs and bombers (but no more than 3,600 of which could be on SLBMs). A drawback is that the U.S.S.R. could choose to build 3,600 ICBM silos, and thereby gain more than a 3-to-1 targeting capability against 1000 U.S. ICBM silos. This could be offset either by the U.S. building additional ICBM silos to match the Soviets, or by adding to the near-term treaty a provision prohibiting construction of additional ICBM silos. The U.S.S.R. probably would resist the later provision, however, as it would not permit having up to 60 percent of the 6,000 weapon limit on ICBMs as the U.S.S.R. has proposed. Another way of looking at it is this: if the U.S.S.R. built 3,600 ICBM silos and the U.S. stayed at 1000, the U.S.S.R. would have superiority in ICBMs at the price of giving the U.S. superiority in SLBMs or bombers, whichever the U.S. chose. It must be admitted, however, that the possibility of 3,600 Soviet ICBM silos facing 1000 U.S. ICBM silos will not alleviate the concerns of those analysts who fear the prospect of a theoretical Soviet first-strike capability. This concern can be alleviated, however, by the U.S. matching the Soviets silo for silo, as the U.S. would have the right to do.

Two additional points must be made. First, because it is weapons that destroy, limiting them is more important than limiting delivery vehicles. Second, the number of delivery vehicles actually existing will be a function of counting rules, i.e., the number of weapons each delivery vehicle is credited with carrying. The second point means that building additional

ICBM silos quickly will be more difficult in practice than in theory. Existing silos will be credited with containing current numbers of missile warheads, therefore, before new silos are built existing silos must either be destroyed, or the two sides must work out on-site inspection procedures to verify that MIRVed ICBMs have been replaced by single-RV ICBMs, in order to ensure that each side remains within the allowed weapons limits.

The 6,000 weapon limit has been proposed by both the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., and would be difficult now to back away from. The U.S. does not want to include bombs as an offset to Soviet air defenses, but bombs kill people and destroy buildings just as ballistic missile warheads and ALCMs (which the U.S. is willing to count in the 6,000 limit) do, and the logical way to offset Soviet air defenses is by adding to the U.S. air defenses. If the U.S. believes air defenses are important, it will find a way to fund them.

The Soviet sub-limit of 3600 warheads on any one leg of the triad (ICBMs, SLBMs, bombers) is accepted in place of the U.S. preference for 3000. In return the Soviets must agree: to no sub-limit on bomber weapons which serves the U.S. bias in favor of bombers, which the U.S. claims enhance stability; to let the U.S. decide unilaterally how many of its weapons will be in bombers rather than making the U.S. Air Force sign up to a pre-determined limit; and to eliminate MIRVed ICBMs.

Elimination of MIRVed ICBMs responds to U.S. fear that these weapons give the U.S.S.R. a real first strike capability. This fear is not universally shared among American analysts, but it is held by a politically significant constituency. If this fear is not addressed, a U.S.-Soviet agreement is probably doomed to nonratification. Because the Soviet SS-18 is at the core of first-strike fear, the U.S.S.R. is asked to eliminate those missiles first.

To simplify verification, mobile launchers of ICBMs are prohibited. This is paid for by eliminating MIRVed ICBMs on both sides, and by suspending development on both sides of an SLBM warhead with a hard-target (ICBM-silo) killing capability. To compensate weapons developers in the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., and to assure technological equivalence in accuracy and size, both sides are permitted to deploy a new single-RV ICBM which must be silo-based for verifiability. Presumably these will be the U.S. SICBM ("Midgetman") and the Soviet SS-25, but that is not required. The requirement is that the sides agree on a missile size limit (e.g., length, weight, volume) that will alleviate fear of a MIRV breakout and reduce U.S. fear that the U.S.S.R. will develop a much larger warhead than the U.S. (If the U.S.S.R. did develop a larger warhead it probably would have no military significance, but it would be a dissimilarity that some could exploit to claim that the U.S.S.R. had gained superiority.)

Western Europe is caught by conflicting desires. Some Europeans want American nuclear weapons in Europe as a symbol of American commitment to NATO defense. Some Europeans want nuclear weapons removed from Europe to reduce the possibility of a nuclear war confined to Europe. Some Europeans want nuclear weapons in Europe to deter Soviet aggression by conventional military force. France and Britain do not want their nuclear forces governed by a U.S.-Soviet condominium. Europeans supported the

U.S. zero-zero INF option (which would have eliminated U.S. P-II IRBMs and GLCMs and Soviet SS-4, SS-5, and SS-20 ballistic missiles globally) when it was announced in 1982. But now that the U.S. and U.S.S.R. appear to be edging toward an agreement that might actually remove U.S. and Soviet INF missiles at least from Europe, some Europeans are concerned that American nuclear guarantees in Europe will be undermined and the threat of Soviet conventional forces aggravated. 3

Actually, Soviet insistence that elimination of INF missiles from a "European zone" must be accompanied by a freeze on British and French forces and a U.S. pledge not to transfer strategic and medium-range weapons to other nations, dooms any chance of an INF agreement because the conditions are not acceptable in Washington, London, or Paris. The U.S. has no power to force France to accept the conditions, and to attempt to do so would only sour U.S.-French relations. The U.S. could renege on its commitment to help Britain build Ohio-class SSBNs and Trident SLBMs, but to do so would sour U.S.-British relations, raise questions in other NATO governments about the reliability of U.S. commitments generally, and raise fears of an emerging U.S.-Soviet condominium.

The provisions in the near-term proposal with respect to P-II/GLCM and SS-20s offer a number of advantages. They recognize the logic of the Soviet position that U.S. P-II and GLCM in Europe should count in the total of strategic weapons, just as the U.S. would insist if Soviet SS-20s were in Cuba. If European host governments should ask that U.S. P-II or GLCMs be withdrawn, the U.S. would have the right to add weapons to its strategic triad to maintain the 6,000 weapon equality with the U.S.S.R. Britain and France would maintain their sovereign right to increase their nuclear forces, but it would then be those European nations that would bear the responsibility for corresponding increases in Soviet SS-20 warheads. As long as European host nations desired them, U.S. INF missiles would remain in Europe to provide the symbolic linkage, commitment, and deterrence that some Europeans want, and that was the primary motivation for the original 1979 decision to deploy the P-II and GLCM. Letting British and French nuclear forces carry the burden of balancing Soviet SS-20s begins to pave the way toward a long-term force posture that will eliminate the possibility of U.S. and Soviet missiles being based in third countries from which they can strike U.S. and Soviet territory. Reduction of Soviet SS-20s not within range of Europe responds to Japanese concerns that reduction of the threat in Europe not result in increasing the threat to Japan. 4

The provision for numerical equality in Europe between Soviet-East European and U.S.-West European missiles with a range over 200 kilometers is part of the search for reductions and equality in Europe. It also responds to reported West German desire to see the U.S.S.R. reduce or get rid of short-range missiles. 5 In contrast, leaving limits on nuclear-capable, non-strategic aircraft to be dealt with in a subsequent treaty admits that the competing proposals of the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., and the problem of establishing objective criteria for defining which aircraft are to be limited, are simply too difficult to be settled now.

The provision to ban nuclear-armed, land-attack SLBMs is based on the judgment that they are unnecessary to war prevention - that task is being done adequately by the triad - and that having them around unneces-

sarily complicates verification and assessment of mutual equivalence. By the same reasoning, it would be useful to suspend further testing and deployment of such systems while negotiations toward agreement on the near-term proposal are in progress.

The provisions on ASAT and BMD systems largely adopt Soviet positions with the primary intent of obtaining Soviet agreement to eliminate their MIRVed ICBMs, beginning with their SS-18s. At the same time the Soviets must agree to let research continue, and to eliminate those defensive systems which on-site inspection by international teams indicates contravene the ABM Treaty and the treaty proposed here. The ban on ASAT systems also precludes interference with satellites required for surveillance and military operations. The problem with a U.S. ASAT system to deter use of a Soviet ASAT system is that deterrence is likely to break down when it is needed most, in war, and when deterrence breaks down, each side is likely to begin shooting down the other's satellites. If ASAT systems are flatly prohibited, they will not, at least immediately, be available for use upon the start of war. Having their satellites available may assist the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. to control and terminate war short of the use of nuclear weapons.

The provisions on BMD systems recognize two factors: one is that a substantial, perhaps a majority, portion of the informed Western public interprets the ABM Treaty as precluding tests and deployments of systems other than those defined in Article II of the Treaty. The other is that strategic stability precludes unilateral deployments by either the U.S. or the U.S.S.R. in areas affecting their nuclear relationship. It is just such unilateral deployments that have contributed so much in the past to instability and turbulence in U.S.-Soviet relations.

The provisions on verification are not particularly specific. This reflects the absence of specificity in U.S. and Soviet proposals in the press. Some observers have speculated that U.S. emphasis on verifiability goes beyond reasonability, and is really a means of blocking progress toward any arms control agreement. At the same time, charges of Soviet cheating (which indicate that U.S. verification capability is quite good), combined with insistence on the need for verifiability in any future U.S.-Soviet arms control agreement, have created perceptions that make it as necessary to deal with the issue of verifiability as it is to deal with the issue of the Soviet ICBM first strike capability. This writer has no doubt that one true test of Soviet desire to achieve an arms control agreement will be its receptivity to the intrusive verification provisions that will be required to satisfy the United States Senate. Conversely, one true test of U.S. desire to achieve an arms control agreement will be its ability to recognize that imperfection is inescapable, that risk is inevitable, and that there comes a point when verification provisions are good enough, and the search for more simply blocks an acceptable agreement. Americans should also recognize that just as reductions and limits on weapons can proceed satisfactorily in incremental steps, so can verification procedures.

Finally, ratification of the TTBT and PNET answers a Soviet demand, and is a logical step toward controlling the pace of technological change by eventually restricting the number of tests conducted each year.

Appendix A Notes

1. The Krasnoyarsk radar and the laser facilities are mentioned in an unclassified Department of Defense/Department of State publication titled Soviet Strategic Defense Programs, which is not dated but which was distributed early in 1986.
2. The quotation is Gorbachev's, at the same time that he offered on-site inspections, according to Stephen S. Rosenfeld in "Signal From Gorbachev," The Washington Post, Friday, January 31, 1986, p. A19.
3. William Drozdiak, "W. Europeans Uneasy About Losing Missiles," The Washington Post, Monday, February 17, 1986, p. A1.
4. It is possible that the Soviets will claim, someday if not immediately, the right to balance Chinese nuclear forces with SS-20s in Asia, as their SS-20s in Europe would balance British and French nuclear forces. Should they make such a claim, however, and should their doing so require an SS-20 force larger than that contemplated in the near-term agreement, they must recognize the possibility of an adjustment in U.S. deployments if required by the Japanese for reassurance. The possibility illustrates that the relationship of U.S.-Soviet nuclear forces and U.S. alliances extends beyond Europe. It is to be hoped that Moscow, Washington, and Beijing will recognize that the U.S.-Soviet-Japanese-Chinese relationship requires the same carefully negotiated, mutually agreed nuclear deployments as the U.S.-European-Soviet relationship. Because no one wishes Japan to become a nuclear power, arrangements in Asia may be more difficult to work out than in Europe, unless Japan is satisfied with a U.S. security commitment without U.S. nuclear force adjustments to offset an increase in Soviet SS-20s to balance increased Chinese forces.
5. William Drozdiak, "Allies Uneasy About Losing Missiles," The Washington Post, Monday, February 17, 1986, p. A27.

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