



cc Mr Butler  
- Sir Robert Armstrong  
Sir Antony Acland

10 DOWNING STREET

11 February 1983

*Dear Clive,*

NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND PUBLIC OPINION

I hope you will agree that our interests in No 10 on Moray Stewart's Committee might be represented by Roger Jackling.

It is kind of you to suggest that we might have someone on the Committee from Press Office but my resources are very hard pressed. I am hoping that Roger Jackling will, in his own field, bridge the gap between policy and presentation just as John Vereker has done in the economic field.

If it is felt that there would also be advantage from time to time in a Press Officer attending Moray Stewart's meetings for a specific purpose, we will try to oblige. I shall of course discuss the agenda with Roger Jackling.

*Jonathan  
Bingham*

B INGHAM

Clive Whitmore Esq  
Permanent Under Secretary of State  
Ministry of Defence







SATURDAY BRIEFING.

WASHINGTON: 29.1.83.

INTERVIEWEE: PAUL WARNKE

INTERVIEWERS: ELIZABETH DREW, NICHOLAS ASHFORD.

CHAIRMAN: RICHARD KERSEAW.

Kershaw:

Well good evening from Washington. 1983 has already been dubbed the year of the missile, it's the year in which new American Cruise and Pershing weapons will arrive in Britain, and other European countries, unless sufficient progress is made in arms limitation talks with the Russians. Well the Soviet Union now has a new leader, in Yuri Andropov, who has seemingly been winning a number of the propaganda battle, over nuclear disarmament. And the Peace Movements in Europe have strengthened very considerably, as we know.

Next week the American Vice President, George Bush, arrives in Britain, as part of America's reply to the Russian peace offensive. With me in Washington is Paul Warnke, the man who negotiated the last Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty - SALT Two - which was not, in the end, ratified here by the Senate. And to put questions to him, with me, are Elizabeth Drew, the Washington correspondent of the New Yorker, and Nicholas Ashford, chief Washington correspondent of The Times.

Well Paul Warnke, 1983 really does look like a critical year for the Western Alliance, and particularly on this subject of disarmament. There's a great deal of anxiety, as we know, in Europe, but also a lot of feeling that there's playing for high stakes between the superpowers. Now can I ask you, with all your great experience of negotiating with the Russians, what do you guess they are after, and up to, at the moment?

Warnke:

Well I think with regard to the INF talks, what they really are after is to prevent the deployment of the ground launch Cruise Missiles, and the Pershing Twos. Now at the same time I continue to feel that they are interested in working out some kind of effective control over nuclear arms, because they're afraid of nuclear war.

Ms. Drew:

There is a feeling, within our own government, that perhaps their priority is to split the Alliance, that that's really what this exercise is about. Do you share that view?

Warnke:

I think that splitting the Alliance would be in the nature of serendipity. I think that their primary objective is to prevent the deployment, particularly in West Germany, of the Pershing Two ballistic missiles, and the ground launch Cruise missiles. I think they see them as a potential pre-emptive strike weapon, and it concerns them. I know that in my negotiations with them they always referred to the ground launch Cruise missile as the German launch Cruise missile. And I think what it reflects is their particular concern about Germany.

Ashford:

There's been a tremendous amount of anti nuclear activity in Western Europe, can you think that the - this Administration, in preparing its - its negotiating position, on - on INF, is very conscious of - of the anti nuclear sentiment, which is building up in Europe?

Warnke:

I don't think that they understand the depth and the - really the gravity of the concern, that the Western European people feel. There's always a tendency, when you're in



government, to talk to other Ministers, and if you talk just to Defence Ministers in NATO, you get a very different view. I think also we have to recognise that very many of the people in the Reagan Administration have little familiarity with Europe. And as a consequence, I think that they discount the very broad base of the anti nuclear weapon movement, in Europe.

s. Drew: You did refer to different groups of people within our Administration.

Warnke: Yes.

s. Drew: As we know, there are deep splits, and there's a feeling that there's some people who don't really believe that you should have arms negot - arms agreements with the Soviet Union. Do you - how strong a group do you think that is? Maybe you should describe a bit of where you think they are, and what power you think they have.

Warnke: Well let's start, of course, with some of the statements that were made by the President himself, during his campaign, and immediately after he became President. He talked about the fact that he regarded the Soviet leaders as people who would lie, cheat, do anything to gain world control. During his campaign he talked about the fact that the way to get arms control was through an arms race. Now I think there are some in the Administration that reflect those views of the President. I like to think that the President, like all Presidents, has gone through a learning experience in office -

Ms. Drew: But do you think he has?

Warnke: And some of his more - some of his more recent statements would indicate that. Now nobody's talking any longer, as George Bush did during the campaign, about winning a limited nuclear war. The President has said he recognises there can be no winners in a nuclear war. Now that is the beginning of wisdom, as far as arms control is concerned.

Ms. Drew: Do you think that represents a real change in attitude, or the fact that perhaps some of their own people said that's not too good, to run around saying things like that, it scares people?

Warnke: Well to the best of my knowledge they are not applying a lie detector test to the Office of the President, as yet, so that I can't answer that question.

Ashford: As you said, I mean the rhetoric has changed somewhat, and in recent days we've seen signs of flexibility on the Administration's position for the zero-zero option, the total elimination of both lots of medium range missiles. And they're now saying that - well if the Russians come up with a reasonable proposal, then, you know, let's - let's talk about it, we're willing to negotiate. What would be, in your view, a reasonable Soviet proposal?

Warnke: Well in my opinion you can't get a durable lasting comprehensive agreement, on just INF, because of this artificial separation.

Dershaw: That's the SS20s and -

Warnke: That's the SS20s, SS4s and SS5s, on the Soviet side, and



our proposed ground launched Cruise missiles and Pershing Twos. Because as I say, it's just a small segment of the entire strategic balance, therefore it seems to me what we ought to be trying to get is an interim agreement, a temporary solution, something in which we would defer deployment, in exchange for significant reductions, in the Soviet SS20 force. And then move that entire issue into the overall START talks, where you then have the possibility of the kinds of trade-offs that could, in time, bring about a genuine elimination of the intermediate nuclear forces. But you can't do it just by saying that we want you to get rid of this entire category of nuclear weapons, and as a consequence we won't deploy 572 new missiles, that perhaps we can't deploy anyway,

Kershaw: But the Soviet offer that they made, the one saying that they would - might reduce the number of their intermediate weapons, to match the British and the French nuclear weapons.

Warnke: Yes.

Kershaw: This had the element - that looked like a splitting device again, it didn't look as if it was intended to be accepted.

Warnke: Well you never know until you try. The one thing that does encourage me, and leads me to feel that we will, in fact, get an agreement, is now there is no longer this insistence that Paul Nitze go over there and play mynah bird, and just say - zero option, zero option, zero option. Now, according to the public statements, he has been told he can listen to some other kind of proposal from the Soviets, and explore it.

Kershaw: But it turned out that behind the scenes he had been having other sorts of discussions anyway, hadn't he?

Warnke: Well anybody who is sent over as a negotiator isn't earning his keep, unless he tries to explore what the possibilities are.

Kershaw: But do you think that this - the possibility which he discussed, which was for a balance of about 75 missiles on either side - I mean is this on the right track for your - what you suggest should be an - an interim solution?

Warnke: I would prefer something that just deferred the entire deployment of the new American missiles, because I think that deploying part of them is still going to run into a lot of popular resentment, popular resistance, in Europe. In addition to that, I'm not a fan of the ground launch Cruise missile. It seems to me that if we deploy them, that in time that the Russians will also develop ground launch Cruise missiles.

Kershaw: But if you defer deployment, then doesn't that play right into the Russian's hands?

Warnke: I don't think it does, provided you get something for it. I mean what we're concerned about, or should be concerned about, is two things: decreasing the Soviet nuclear threat to Europe, and preserving Alliance cohesion. Now you aren't going to reduce the nuclear threat to Europe by deploying 572 American missiles in Western Europe, that won't take a single warhead out of the Soviet arsenal. Now wouldn't it be much better to eliminate, let's say, 100 Soviet SS20s, with 300 warheads, in return for a deferral of the deployment of these new weapons?



Drew:

As you know, there are important policy makers in our government, particularly in the Pentagon, who take the opposite view from what you've just said, and they argue that until the Soviet Union is convinced that we will deploy these weapons in Europe, they will not strike a deal, or any kind of an attractive deal. What's wrong with that reasoning?

Warnke:

I think what's wrong with that reasoning is that it ignores the possibilities of negotiation, unless you have an arms build-up actually taking place. My experience is that the Soviets are prepared to negotiate an arms control agreement. They are not the ones that walked away from the bargaining table, back in 1979, it was us. And I think that the flaw in the reasoning is that it assumes that the Soviets don't have a genuine interest in trying to reduce the risk of nuclear war. My experience is that they're far more sensitive to the consequences of modern war than we are. It's been a long time since a gun was fired in hostilities in the continent of the United States, it was the time of muskets and cannonballs.

Ms. Drew:

So what you're saying, and this goes back to an earlier question I asked you, is that this group, which is important and powerful and, as you know, tenacious, you believe will not prevail in the battle for the President's mind on the negotiations?

Warnke:

I like to think that particularly with George Shultz, as Secretary of State, there's going to be greater sensitivity to the European climate, and of the opinion of our European allies. How to me the eventual decision on deployment should be a European decision. I mean they're the ones that have to make up their minds. If we come up with a deal that's good enough for our Western European allies, it ought to be plenty good enough for us, and I think we can come up with a deal that's good enough for our Western European allies.

Hershaw:

You've talked about Russian perceptions of war, as against perhaps European countries' perceptions of war, but actually what has happened is that the Russians have modernised their intermediate force -

Warnke:

Yes.

Hershaw:

Which is targeted on places like where I live --

Warnke:

That's correct.

Hershaw:

And that we have not modernised it, so that - I mean you do accept that the change in the power factors was made by a Russian overt act.

Warnke:

Yeah, but you see that again assumes that there's some particular magic, in having an American warhead that the Americans can launch from West Germany, or from the United Kingdom. Now we decided back a long time ago that it made much more sense to put the warheads that can strike the Soviet Union on things like our ballistic missile submarines, or in the great plains of the United States, and that's what deters Soviet attack on Western Europe. There is no magic in putting the missiles in launch points in Western Europe. As a matter of fact, the logic of it is something that to me would be appalling if I were a Western European.

Ashford:

But there always remains the European finger on the trigger,



through the independent nuclear systems which France and Britain possess. I mean what is one going to do about this?

Warnke:

Well it certainly is something that the Soviets must take into account, and it's one of the reasons why the so-called zero option is not anything that would ever be appealing to them. I know that the argument that has been made is that after all the British and the French forces are not under the control of NATO, but neither, of course, are the American forces. The new Cruise missiles, and the Pershing Twos, at least under present plans, would not be controlled by NATO, they'd be controlled exclusively by the United States.

Kershaw:

But there is going to be a great deal of pressure, Mr. Warnke, at least public opinion pressure, to try and get dual key operation, or dual key control, of those weapons. Do you think that that would ever be acceptable to an American Administration?

Warnke:

Well as far as dual key operations are concerned, I don't believe that the Germans have any interest in that at all. As a matter of fact I think one of the conditions is that these would be weapons that are exclusively under American control. As far as the United Kingdom is concerned, you're the masters of your own fate, you can make that one of the conditions to any deployment of Cruise missiles.

Kershaw:

Or one could say the mistresses of our own fate, with our present government.

Warnke:

Yes.

Ms. Drew:

You've made a couple of mentions of the START talks - the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks - how far along do you think those are?

Warnke:

From what I have heard or read, they aren't very far along at all, because again it seems to me that what we're trying to do is to deal with only that part of the problem that concerns us, and not getting into some of the things that concern the Soviet Union. The other problem is that like the zero option, it's too big a step to take at one time. As I gather, the President's proposed that we shrink the number of ballistic missile warheads to 5000, of which no more than 2500 would be on the land-based ICBMs - a very desirable objective. You can't get there in a single step, it is like trying to get down from the top of the tree, if you do it branch you'll land intact, if you try and do it in one step, you're going to be one hell of a mess.

Ashford:

General Rowley, the other day, said that he thought, with reference to the START talks, that at least agreement on confidence building measures, proposed by President Reagan, could be reached this year. Could that be one of the steps to which you refer?

Warnke:

I don't really put a great deal of start in the so-called confidence building measures, as far as strategic arms are concerned. They've got a real place when it comes to conventional armaments. Something, for example, like the withdrawal of the heavy armoured divisions from the central front of Europe would be a genuine confidence building measure. But the only way you build confidence, in avoiding strategic nuclear war, is by limiting and reducing strategic nuclear weapons. No



kinds of pledges, as to the - I'm not going to use them, don't worry about them - is going to do any good.

Kershaw: Do those marvellous initials, MAD, mad - mutually assured destruction - do they still sit at the centre of American thinking on the strategic arms threat?

Warnke: I'm not sure whether they do, I am confident that they should. You see the difficulty is that some people think of mutual assured destruction as being a theory, as being some sort of a doctrine that you can repeal, or that you can change. It's not a theory, it's a fact. If there's a nuclear exchange, between the United States and the Soviet Union, we will destroy one another mutually. Now unless you start with that basic fact, you aren't going to be able to make any sense, out of either strategic doctrine, or nuclear arms control.

Ms. Drew: You did say earlier that Vice President Bush is no longer talking about a winnable nuclear war, but there's a lot of thinking here that the Pentagon continues to plan for one. Is it your impression that that is what they're doing, and that they do think that there can be such a thing?

Warnke: There has always been some planning for fighting and winning a nuclear war. I'd have to say, for example, that Presidential Directive 59, that was issued during the Carter Administration, talked about fighting a limited and protracted nuclear war. Now I think that the Reagan Administration documents that have been leaked, and that have been released, take that one step further. You recall the Defence Department Guidance, 1934 - 1938, that was leaked to the New York Times last Spring, talked about the fact that the United States must have the forces that can prevail, in case of nuclear war. Well if that's really what you think your forces have to be able to do, then forget about arms control.

Kershaw: You're back to mutually assured destruction.

Warnke: Oh no, what you're back to then is the idea that there will not be mutually assured destruction, there'll be kind of unilaterally assured destruction - you can destroy them and they can't destroy you. And that way madness lies.

Ms. Drew: Is it your impression that that is how our current strategic thinkers, and Secretary of Defence, his group think?

Warnke: There are very disturbing signs that at least some people in the Pentagon, principally civilians, think in those terms. If you read the Secretary of Defence's annual report to Congress, for the fiscal year 1973, it contains the statement that our forces -

Ms. Drew: You mean '33. ;

Warnke: 1933, sorry, that our nuclear forces must serve at least 4 purposes, and one of the purposes is in case of nuclear war, so we can end the war on terms favourable to ourselves and our allies. A commendable objective, but totally illusion.

Kershaw: Is there an argument, too, among American policy planners, that actually although it's very expensive to keep on running the race, that you are pushing the Russians even harder every time you notch it up a bit higher? The Russians can afford it



less well than can the Western allies.

Warnke:

Well there has been that theory expressed by people that should know better. The idea being that somehow, if we just up the ante a bit we're going to deal the Russians out of the game. I don't know of anybody who has dealt with the Soviet leadership who feels that way.

Kershaw:

Not deal them out of the game, but cause them an unacceptable and damaging cost.

Warnke:

Well you say an unacceptable and damaging - damaging yes, unacceptable, clearly no. The most recent CIA report indicates that if we think that the Soviet economy is on the verge of total collapse, that we're kidding ourselves. They will do whatever is necessary in order to keep pace. You have to recognise that they can screw down that standard of living, and not worry about getting voted out of office, and you also have to remember that for the average Soviet citizen, these are the good old days - this is as good as it's ever been.

Ashford:

But what about the cost factor here, in the United States? Isn't the growing demand in Congress, for cuts in defence spending, going to get through to the Administration, and this is going to be a factor in their thinking about arms control?

Warnke:

I would think that it's a surety, and I think probably it will. There are certainly some of the strategic programmes that are inordinately expensive, for example building two strategic bombers is not, in my opinion, something that will ever take place, given the budgetary constrictions that presently exist. I think the MX will finally go to its rightful place, which is on the shelf, just because of the cost.

Kershaw:

That's the new intercontinental missile.

Warnke:

That is correct.

Ms. Drew:

You were in the Administration that started this whole mess, I suppose, would be the word, about the intermediate weapons -

Warnke:

Yes.

Ms. Drew:

Missiles in Europe. Do you think they should be there at all?

Warnke:

In my opinion it's a very poor idea. I think if we had, at the present time, 572 American missiles, stationed in vulnerable Western European territory, then all of a sudden invented the Polaris submarine, if we would regard that, and our Western Europeans would - our friends would regard that as being just a tremendous tremendous development. We would still be able to target all of the Soviet targets, from an invulnerable platform, which is not located in Western Europe, where it can be blown up.

Ms. Drew:

Then why was it done?

Warnke:

Well it was done, I think, principally as a response to discomfort expressed by our Western European allies, most notably Chancellor Helmut Schmidt. He indicated concern about what was referred to then as the Duro strategic balance. That concept never really made any sense to me. It was - it's



sometimes theorised that this would be a coupling device, that somehow this would integrate American security with that of Western Europe, to a greater extent. It instead threatens to become one of the most effective decoupling devices that the Soviets could ever have devised. I see, as I've said, no magic in being able to hit the Soviet Union from territory of Western Europe. We already have almost 10,000 strategic warheads that can strike every target that these 572 could strike. And that, to me, is a very effective deterrent, it doesn't involve the political costs, it does not involve the disruption within the Alliance, that that decision presents. I regret it was made, I particularly regret it was made during a Democratic Administration.

Kershaw: You spoke earlier of perhaps some insensitivity towards the scale of European opinion here, and there's a popular response, including in some of the Press, seems to be that the Europeans are just being difficult in their response to receiving these new weapons. Are the counter feelings building up in the American polis, among the people, that could lead to a danger of new American isolationism, let's begin to think of pulling the troops out, the Mansfield Amendment being revived in thought?

Warrick: Well I think you have to recognise that some of the so-called hard-liners are basically isolationists, and that therefore they're perfectly prepared to make the threat, that unless the Europeans show that they love us, by accepting our missiles, we'll pull back our troops. That to me, of course, is an absurd way to deal with the problem. I don't think you'd terrify the Russians by shooting yourself in the foot, and I think we're much better off recognising that the principal coupling device, and the major guarantee of American participation, is the presence of American troops in Europe.

Kershaw: Coupling in the sense meaning keeping the two sides of the Atlantic joined.

Warrick: Absolutely, that is correct, because the -- the Soviets have to recognise that as long as we have 300,000, or something like that number, of American troops in Europe, that any attack on Western Europe would, in the words of the NATO Charter, be construed as an attack on the United States.

Ashford: It's not just a matter of isolationists in the Administration, I mean there's growing sentiment in Congress, for a withdrawal of troops, or to, you know, do something to show displeasure towards the Europeans.

Warrick: I don't think that it represents any wide segment of opinion. I think it's principally the extreme right wing Republican Senators that have been talking in those terms. I see nothing like the amount of support for a withdrawal of American troops that existed at the time of the Mansfield Resolution. At that time a lot of Liberals, a lot of genuine Atlanticists, were wondering whether we shouldn't cut back at least, on the number of American troops in Europe. It was not linked to any decisions about deployment of missiles.

Ms. Drew: I'm interested that you say that, because there was a point last year at which even some Democratic Senators were saying that they feared that if something like the Mansfield Amendment came up, it would pass, it would go through Congress like a shot. I wonder if you think that it's connected with other issues, or perceived issues, with Europe as well, it's



not just the arms issues, but trade, a whole set of issues and attitudes, which take a form of arguing over arms or troops, or whatever, but it's a broader set of concerns.

Warnke: Yeah, oh sure, there's always a knee-jerk reaction any time the Europeans do anything that displeases us, because we can say - well good Lord, we're taking care of their security, why aren't they grateful? I mean why don't they go along with the boycott against the Soviet pipeline? I think it's an irrational response, and I think that it would never actually be carried through. I think that most Americans believe, I think that even most Republican Senators believe, that our security is inextricably linked with that of Western Europe.

Ashford: What happens though if Chancellor Cole loses the election, on March the 6th, and the SPD take over? Isn't this - first of all you won't get your deployment, and this will set up a whole sort of chain reaction, in Europe, and this will also produce very negative reactions here, on this side of the Atlantic.

Warnke: Well I don't think that we can have any guarantee that whatever Party is in power in Germany will, in fact, be able to accept the American missiles. That's one of the reasons why it's so important to try and cut some sort of an interim deal at the present time, and why it's so important to point out to the Soviets that we still have plenty of bargaining leverage, even without a deployment decision for these 572 new missiles. We have, for example, the prospect of sea launch Cruise missiles. We could easily put 572 Cruise missiles on surface ships, on general purpose submarines, and they could strike the Soviet Union in the same limited time period. So that we aren't without bargaining cards. I think we've put far far too much emphasis on what essentially is a very very incremental kind of an issue, which is this issue of the European missiles.

Kershaw: You see in Britain, of course, you have a greater distinction, perhaps, between the two leading political parties, that where the Conservative Government is firmly behind retaining nuclear weapons and accepting American ones, you have the Labour Party which is committed to actual unilateral disarmament. Which does change very much the potential position of Britain within the NATO Alliance. Is that - I mean obviously that would be disturbing to people in the Pentagon, and this Administration, but do they discount it, because they see Mrs. Thatcher as leading in the opinion polls, or do they not recognise that that is a very serious threat for the future?

Warnke: I think that there is a feeling that if the Labour Party were to come into power, that probably that policy would not be implemented. Now whether that's a correct judgement or not is something that obviously you would know much better than I do. But I think there is a feeling that probably Mrs. Thatcher will survive, and that probably whoever got into power, whether Labour Party or what Tory, would reconsider the idea of unilateral disarmament.

Ashford: But isn't the United States justified in feeling a little bit peeved with the Europeans at the moment, because after all, as you pointed out, it was the Europeans who originally called for the deployment of these missiles, and now it is the Europeans who are beginning to turn round and say - well we're not quite so sure now?

Warnke: Well I think if you look back at that so-called NATO double



decision, of December 1979, you won't find anything in it about the zero-zero option. That what it said is that NATO will go ahead and deploy these 572 missiles, unless we can achieve some sort of an arms control agreement, that will render the deployment unnecessary. Now that's not zero option. In addition to that I point out that from December of 1979 till November of 1981, there were no negotiations, so it does seem to me that the Europeans are perfectly justified in saying - we need a reconsideration at this point, and we want some sort of a solution that possibly involves deferral.

Ms. Drew:

I'd like to know why, going back to where we started, why, other than the fact you think it'd be the rational thing to happen, you think the Reagan Administration will actually end up making some sort of a deal. If you could just take us through the processes of development of their thinking, that you expect to take place.

Warnke:

Well I think it's going to become obvious that this resistance in Western Europe is real, and that there is, in fact, a genuine question as to whether the deployment can take place. I'd be quite sure, for example, that we would not, by the end of 1983, or in 1984, be able to deploy any Cruise missiles, in Holland or in Belgium. Now possibly Italy, some people feel there's no way of destabilising an Italian Government, so perhaps the Italian Government can go ahead and deploy them. But at the same time there is a growing resistance. As far as Germany is concerned, if Mr. Cole wins, he is still faced with the fact that there are a lot of CDU members, who feel very strongly about the deployment of American Cruise missiles and Pershing Twos, and no politician is going to remain successful if he ignores the will of his constituents. I think also it's going to become increasingly clear that the maximum bargaining power that we have is by looking at the entire strategic complex, looking at things like the MX, in conjunction with the SS20, the sea launch Cruise missiles in conjunction with the SS20. And that therefore the rational thing is to combine the negotiations, so that we have the maximum number of trade-offs.

Ms. Drew:

Doesn't that make it more difficult to get an agreement on the intermediate range weapons, because of the difficulty of START that you described?

Warnke:

I don't think so, no, because what I'm talking about is the possibility of having some sort of a temporary agreement, something that involves a genuine reduction in the nuclear threat, to Western Europe, in exchange for postponing the deployment, let's say, for 2 years.

Kershaw:

In all of this there's a point I've seen you quoted upon before, but the - there's no point in just talking about deployment either, and moving perhaps Russian missiles back behind the Urals. There is a question of any realistic agreement has to talk about destruction, actual removal of weapon systems.

Warnke:

Oh no question about that. After all the SS20s are mounted on mobile launchers, so any proposal by the Soviets, just to move them East of the Urals, is, in my opinion, worse than nothing. Because then, at a time of crisis, the crisis would be intensified if we were to see those SS20s moving back West. In addition to which we have a mutual security treaty with Japan. Now is it consistent with that treaty to say to the Soviets - fine, move 100 SS20s, so they can hit Japan? Or



even China. So that I don't regard that as being any kind of a proposition at all. When I talk about reduction, I'm talking about actual dismantling and destruction.

Ashford:

And that leads to the question of verification. How does one verify that these things have been destroyed, bearing in mind .....

Warnke:

Well that really is very simple. With our photo reconnaissance satellites we have been verifying for quite some time, the destruction of a certain number of ICBM silos. You work out the rules, in the standing consultative committee in - in Geneva. For example with regard to strategic bombers. We require that they cut the strategic bomber in half, then exhibit it on an airstrip. Now these SS20 launchers are clearly identifiable, and we would have to see evidence of the physical destruction of that launcher.

Ashford:

So you don't necessarily need on the spot verification.

Warnke:

Oh, on the spot verification would be of very little use, under those circumstances, because how are you going to be able to tramp all over the wildernesses of Siberia, and make sure that you've detected all of the ones that there are. What you have to have is actual knowledge, that a certain number of them have been physically destroyed, and that's totally verifiable.

Ms. Drew:

This may be true of the mobile missiles and the intermediate range weapons, but isn't it true that verification on some of the elements that would go into the larger talks, particularly Cruise missiles, is becoming extremely difficult, if not impossible?

Warnke:

It's one of the reasons why I don't favour the idea of the limited deployment of ground launch Cruise missiles in Western Europe. Once we begin to deploy any Cruise missiles, it's going to become extraordinarily difficult for the other side to know how many have been deployed. With air launch Cruise missiles you've got an identifiable vehicle, the strategic bomber, and you know how many each strategic bomber can carry. But launch points for ground launch Cruise missiles are almost infinite.

Kershaw:

Mr. Warnke, can I ask the final question from this side of the table? The image of Western technological superiority in defence seems to have been dented in Europe, together, and it's come at the same time as the idea of a natural and continuous economic growth by the West, perhaps the two senses of deficiency are related. But are they - is that doubt present in this country too? In the United States?

Warnke:

I think that there has been some shaking of our view about our technological superiority, such things as the unsuccessful attempt to rescue the hostages in Iran, and the fact that the helicopters didn't work. Then the fact that we're having trouble, of course, with the Pershing Two. I mean all of that sort of thing does shake confidence to some extent. I'd say the prevailing view, though, is that technologically, however bad we are, the Russians are worse.

Kershaw:

Well Mr. Warnke, from Elizabeth Drew, and Nicholas Ashford, and myself, thank you very much for being with us, and that's all from Saturday Briefing, in Washington. Good night.





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