

MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

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National Security Planning Group Meeting
December 17, 1984, 11:00a.m.-12:00 noon, Situation Room

SUBJECT: Discussion of Substantive Issues for Geneva (S)

PARTICIPANTS:

The President

The Vice President

The Vice President's Office:

Admiral Daniel J. Murphy

State

Secretary George P. Shultz

OSD:

Secretary Caspar W. Weinberger

OMB:

Alton Keel

CIA:

Director William J. Casey

JCS:

General John W. Vessey, Jr.

White House:

Mr. Edwin Meese, III

Mr. James Baker

ACPA:

Director Kenneth Adelman

Mr. Robert C. McFarlane

Chairman, US INF Delegation:

Ambassador Paul H. Nitze

NSC:

Dr. Ronald F. Lehman II

Chairman, US START Delegation:

Ambassador Edward Rowny

Minutes

Mr. McFarlane opened the meeting, noting that it was one of four or five meetings in preparation for the Geneva talks in January. Previous meetings had dealt with US objectives and Soviet objectives and the format of the talks. The last meeting dealt

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BY hjt NARA, DATE 12/21/05

with questions of whether to keep START, INF and Space issues separate, or whether to merge all or some of them. Today we would be dealing with a discussion of the substantive content of the Geneva talks, to include START, INF, Space, and the relationship between offense and defense. Our immediate objective is to set into motion formal negotiations and discuss the relationship between offense and space generally. The Soviet Union will try to prevent US SDI research and will urge various moratoria. They will seek to get commitments from us in advance not to develop SDI. The question before us, therefore, is how to sustain SDI, especially with publics, in the face of sustained pressure from both the Soviet Union and the Congress. Thus, the Soviet Union is returning to the talks because they have seen the success we have had in getting through the President's modernization program, including M-X, TRIDENT, and SDI. They also have come back to the table to block the Belgian and Dutch INF deployments. They expect to block those deployments by being at the negotiating table. They believe that there is an impulse on the Left, perhaps in the Congress, to stop programs and have a moratorium, as long as the superpowers are talking. They fear that the deployments will upset the talks. (S)

Mr. McFarlane then turned to the specific recommendations, recalling that in START we have sought deep reductions to the level of 5,000 ballistic missile warheads and to stress movement away from destabilizing systems, particularly emphasizing the importance of slow-flying systems such as bombers, as opposed to fast-flying ballistic missiles. He noted that in the past year we have done an enormous amount of work and that in Geneva we may wish to be in a position to discuss the trade-offs between areas of US and areas of Soviet advantage, i.e., between fast-flying and slow-flying systems. He noted that Ambassador Rowley has done much work in this regard. For Geneva, Secretary Shultz will need instructions which permit him to discuss our ideas on trade-offs. (S)

Mr. McFarlane then turned to a discussion of INF. Again, he raised the question of the Belgian and Dutch deployments and the important role that Ambassador Nitze has played. Mr. McFarlane noted that we have a solid position and that we are prepared to agree to any number between zero and 572. He noted that our current proposal has demonstrated our flexibility in our readiness not to deploy our complete entitlement under an equal global ceiling in Europe. In agreeing to reduce both P-II and GLCM, and in our willingness to discuss aircraft limitations, these all addressed Soviet concerns. (S)

Mr. McFarlane made clear that the most difficult issue would be space. There is a close relationship between ASAT and SDI research; unfortunately, we have had the statements by Mrs. Thatcher and Mr. Mitterrand in France accusing us of over-arming and of needing to avoid the space arms race. He noted that both France and Great Britain have independent nuclear

deterrence based on SLBMs and they are afraid that SDI will be viewed as negating their independent forces. There is a genuine ignorance of what SDI is all about. He reminded everyone of the importance of stressing our interest in a non-nuclear system. We need to make the case for SDI not only to our Allies but to the American people and to the Russians themselves. He noted that we have been living under a concept of deterrence based on the threat of massive offensive retaliation. For twelve years, really longer than that, this concept of deterrence has continued, but has been influenced by certain assumptions which are no longer true. First is the assumption that we can't build effective defenses. The second was the notion that if we agreed to limit defensive systems, we would be able to get limitations on offensive systems. The third was an assumption that the Soviet Union would limit their defensive systems as well. Fourth, there was a commitment that neither side would seek unilateral advantage over the other. However, that commitment has been violated by the Soviet Union in a quest for both offensive and defensive superiority. In defense they have continued to modernize their ABM system and air defense system; indeed, two of their air defenses, the SA-10 and the SA-12, may be dual-capable. They have also built an ASAT system. Therefore, it is imperative that we make the case that Soviets have violated these basic premises and therefore they must reduce offensive systems or else we will have no choice but to deploy defenses. In addition, however, we must persuade the Soviet Union that it is good to deploy defense, to move away from our total reliance on offensive systems. We must recognize that the Soviet Union will not take easily to this view, so we must show them that we are headed in the right direction. He indicated that we all agree on the necessity of putting down a marker on SDI. He concluded that in the next week or two we would be making decisions on the substantive issues. (S)

The President interjected at this point. He wanted to put something forward without pride of authorship concerning what had been said by Mitterrand on outer space. The President had been reading what Gorbachev and Thatcher had been saying. The President stated his belief that the US and USSR should join in discussions of ASAT and weapons in space that can be directed at earth, such as nuclear weapons. His goal is the total elimination of nuclear weapons, and he believes that we are not saying anything that they have not also said recently. He noted that SDI is the main target of the Soviet Union in Geneva. He stated his belief that they are coming to the table to get at SDI, and that we need to stay with our SDI research program no matter what. He stated his belief that international control for world protection might be possible at some point with SDI, and that SDI would help alleviate the dangers associated with the impossible job of verification. He noted, for example, that someone like Qadhafi could develop nuclear weapons and perhaps smuggle them into the United States. Therefore, he said, we would need a wide

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range of measures to handle the threat of a covert nuclear weapon, to ensure that outlaws or other nations cannot gain advantage. He noted that people now understand how to build nuclear weapons and that you cannot make mankind unlearn what it already knows. He referenced the test flight recently of an SS-X-24 with ten warheads. He again emphasized that there is no price on SDI and we must be frank with the Soviet Union on the need to go down the path towards defense, to eliminate nuclear weapons, but clearly we are not going to give up SDI. (S)

Secretary Shultz agreed that defense is important and added that it is important even if you don't have the elimination of nuclear weapons. He even cited an example where nuclear weapons are eliminated but conventional systems exist. He noted that we must also deal with cruise missiles and bomber defenses and expand our program beyond the current SDI effort. He reminded everyone that he had just spent 2½ hours with British Foreign Minister Geoffrey Howe and that Howe had the same views as Mrs. Thatcher. Nevertheless, he indicated that his meeting with NATO Foreign Ministers had gone extremely well and that he had used the formula that Paul Nitze had developed. He was confident that we would have no difficulty in persuading people of the value of SDI if we put the right twist on it, as he had done at NATO, where he said that nobody gave him a counter-argument. The Secretary welcomed Bud's emphasis on public diplomacy and noted that we have agreed on a forum which includes ASAT and weapons in space. He noted that there is an overlap between ASAT and SDI, and this means we must be careful. He noted also that Geneva is going to be a public diplomacy event, whether we like it or not. Some one thousand reporters are expected to be there along with the anchor people from the three networks. The State Department reporters are very unhappy because they will not now be the primary reporters for their news services. Shultz's view is that there actually will not be much of a story for them in Geneva because we will hope to keep some element of confidentiality. He noted that we must be prepared that the meeting may break up, and we must be ready, right there immediately, to deal with this situation. We need to sound an appealing note to protect ourselves from a possible Soviet walkout. Therefore, we need to lay out our position quite clearly. It must have content, and we must go beyond a "bull session." He recognized that there is a lot of content in the area of offensive systems negotiations, but also that there is content in the space area. He agreed that it is important to bring up the issue of how we will be evolving towards defenses. We must go out and make clear our position. (S)

The President interjected that we must stress that in a context of the Soviets' having already said that they want to give up nuclear weapons, if they walk-out of Geneva because of SDI, we can emphasize that they are not serious. We must be prepared to make clear to the American people that this is a system which does not

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kill people; that it would free the world from the threat of nuclear weapons. Again, he stressed the importance of SDI to deal with the problem of verification and again noted that SDI could be put in international hands to protect the whole world. He stated his belief that the Soviet Union will have difficulty walking out when we have made a sound case. (S)

Secretary Shultz suggested that we should not assume failure; that would only lead to failure. Instead, we need to look at our position so that we are not afraid of failure. (S)

Director Casey noted that we must be ready nevertheless for the prospect that they will put us on the defensive and even walk out. (S)

Secretary Shultz responded that we have the basis for avoiding that possibility if we make the right decisions. (S)

Mr. McFarlane noted that there is in existence a public diplomacy plan being prepared by the NSC staff and that the central element is the so-called SDI bible. This book would be available within a couple of weeks and would be made public before the negotiations in Geneva. He added that public speaking engagements will help us in our effort to promote SDI and that the President should give a speech on SDI sometime after the Geneva talks and address it in the State of the Union message as well. Mr. McFarlane said that it was important that everyone get out on the stump to speak for SDI. (S)

Mr. Meese indicated that we must distance the space issue from the SDI issue, that they are not the same, and that the President's idea is not simply a space question. (S)

The President added that we are looking to see what these technologies can do. (S)

Mr. Baker indicated that there was confusion about SDI along the lines which had been discussed that morning. (S)

Secretary Weinberger stated that there is confusion about SDI because many people have not examined the issue carefully and because of the Soviet disinformation campaign. He stressed that ours would be a non-nuclear system. He noted that we don't have SDI technology available yet, but we need to work on it. Some people say that it is expensive, but Secretary Weinberger expressed his view that it would not be as expensive as all of the offensive systems that we would need, absent SDI. It might cost one-tenth as much. Many people are not aware of the consequences of not having defenses. He believes that SDI is in the same position with respect to negotiations as was the Pershing-II. The Soviet Union fears it and will do everything they can to encourage

delay and to try to stop the program. Instead we have to make the case that SDI will even encourage reductions. (S)

The President indicated that he had been reading about the phenomenon of nuclear winter, and of the volcano Timbora which erupted in 1816, creating a cloud which created winter conditions--snow and ice--around much of the world there was no summer. Nuclear winter ought to encourage reductions. (S)

Director Adelman indicated that nuclear winter should also increase support for SDI. Also, SDI is important to prevent horrible consequences from an accidental war, such as described in the novel Fail-Safe. He agreed that it was important to distinguish SDI from space, and that we could do that by negotiating rules of behavior for anti-satellite systems and satellites themselves. That gives something to us to negotiate about. Our theme would be that we need to make the world safer through the controlled use of space, that negotiations along these lines were better than doing nothing. He then noted that the Defense Department had generated some interesting statistics noting that since the ABM Treaty, the Soviet Union has spent more money on defense than on offense, while the United States spent six times as much on offense as on defense. (S)

Mr. McFarlane interjected that we still don't have an ICBM in the ground. (S)

The President built on that theme, noting that many of those who are for the small ICBM now will turn against it after they have killed M-X, when they hear complaints about missile trains and missile trucks moving around the United States. He can imagine what the environmental complaints would be. That is another reason why we must have SDI. (S)

Secretary Weinberger noted that the Soviet Union has the mobile SS-X-24 and SS-X-25, and that the Soviets have come close to stopping the mobile Pershing-II's and GLCMs, and indeed have not given up trying to stop them. They are continuing to try to stop our M-X system, despite the fact that they have three or four similar new missiles. He made clear that the Soviet Union will try to blame us for a breakup in the talks if we don't agree to give up SDI. He also said that we must be careful about ASAT. The Soviet Union has an ASAT system, and they are trying to prevent us from developing one. If we have a moratorium, our scientists will drift away from the project and we will become further and further behind. A moratorium is bad, and in any case, it is not verifiable. With respect to space, he said that we should take the affirmative position, that we are going ahead with SDI and that we are not going to be stopped. He argued that we should be prepared to talk about permissible changes to the ABM

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Treaty and concluded by saying that there are worse things than signing a bad agreement, and that it is no victory to sign a bad agreement. (S)

The President interjected that he had been talking with a number of experts who are critical of SDI, and they all seem to think that it is a nuclear weapon. We need to explain to them that it is not a nuclear system we seek. (S)

Secretary Shultz questioned whether SDI was truly a non-nuclear program. (S)

Secretary Weinberger noted that certain types of terminal defense based on older technologies were still nuclear, but that he hoped to move beyond these. (S)

Director Adelman said that terminal defense could be non-nuclear but that the older systems were nuclear. (S)

Ambassador Nitze asked what about EXCALIBUR? (S)

Secretary Shultz said that he had thought that some of these systems were nuclear. (S)

Secretary Weinberger said that the defenses against ballistic missile systems that were space-based were intended to be non-nuclear. (S)

Director Adelman noted that some of these space-based systems might be powered by nuclear reactors. (S)

Secretary Weinberger indicated that we must stress that these are systems to defend the United States. He is often asked whether we are defending cities or weapons and his answer is that we are defending the United States by destroying the weapons. (S)

Ambassador Rowny noted that we are not talking about putting nuclear weapons in space, only nuclear reactors. (S)

Mr. McFarlane stated that in fact that was not the case, that approximately \$200 million was in the DOE budget for EXCALIBUR, which involves a nuclear explosion in space. (S)

Secretary Weinberger responded that this was not the kill mechanism. (S)

Mr. Meese said that Secretary Shultz was correct, and that we did not want to prematurely limit the technologies involved. (S)

Secretary Shultz indicated that he had thought that there were nuclear weapons involved.

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Secretary Weinberger said that what we were seeking is a non-nuclear system, i.e., non-nuclear kill. (S)

Mr. McFarlane indicated that we can describe the program as heavily focused on non-nuclear systems. (S)

Secretary Weinberger made clear that our theme must be to reduce offensive systems as we evolve towards defensive systems.

The President interjected and turned to Secretary Shultz, noting that we should get the Soviet Union to agree to work towards the elimination of nuclear weapons and then throw this commitment back at them if they stand in the way of strategic defenses. (S)

The President stated his desire to get this process of reductions going. (S)

Ambassador Nitze indicated that we might make progress in INF towards reductions if we would begin with a proposal of equal reductions on each side. (S)

The President responded by noting that the Soviet Union had been continuing to build up their forces. (S)

Secretary Weinberger indicated that what we are in favor of is not equal reductions but reductions to equal levels, and asked Paul Nitze if he meant reductions to equal levels. (S)

Nitze responded that he indeed meant equal reductions. (S)

The President interjected that he thought proportional reductions were acceptable. (S)

The Vice President asked the President if he had not in fact proposed to Gromyko proportionate reductions. (S)

The President said that it seemed to him that if we were willing to live with 572 for us and over 1,000 for the Soviets, then we ought to be able to live without equal numbers on both sides. (S)

Mr. McFarlane commented that we are looking for a definition or approach that makes a compromise look better; e.g., the Pershing-II has one warhead on its launcher; the GLCM has four warheads on its launcher; and the SS-20 has three warheads on its launcher. We are looking for a formula which might describe an equal reduction in launchers that would also result in a equal warhead outcome. (S)

Ambassador Nitze indicated that that was correct. (S)

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The President stated his view that we needed to emphasize the idea of elimination of nuclear weapons and in the end, the zero option for INF would be a great step in that direction. (S)

Ambassador Nitze indicated that we may need to make specific proposals to the Soviet Union. It would be useful if we could make general statements, even if we don't present specific proposals. For example, we could say that we would accept in principle equal reductions even if we don't give them the details. (S)

Director Adelman made a similar point, arguing that we will need a response to charges that we are not serious about negotiating on space issues either. (S)

Secretary Shultz said that it is important that we not get into the lingo of simply protecting SDI; we need to word it in the right way, as, for example, Paul Nitze has suggested. He indicated that we need to find a way of defending SDI without appearing inflexible. (S)

The President interjected that whatever we do, we must be resolved among ourselves that SDI is not the price for reductions. (S)

Secretary Shultz noted that the problem of MIDGETMAN and railroad cars had made one thing clear, and that is that arms control is important to the United States. He stressed that we must reach arms control agreements because it is not clear that we can contemplate an unrestrained race with the Soviet Union. We need reductions and we need to trade for them; they won't come for free. (S)

Mr. McFarlane indicated that we would prepare instructions for a decision by the President over the next couple of weeks and that Mr. Casey would prepare a presentation on the problems of verification. (S)

Director Casey said that verification has been built up as an absolute, and we need to prepare public opinion for what it is that we are likely to achieve. (S)

The President concluded with a joke about an American in the Moscow subway who, when shown the beautiful marble work, asked, "Where are the trains?" He was given no answer but only more demonstrations of the beauty of the marble. Finally, after asking, "Where are the trains?" several times, his Soviet counterpart responded, "What about the Negro problem in the South?"

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ACTION

December 22, 1984

MEMORANDUM FOR ROBERT C. MCFARLANE

FROM: RON LEHMAN *Ron*

SUBJECT: Minutes, NSPG Meeting, December 17, 1984

Attached for your review and approval are the minutes from the December 17 National Security Planning Group meeting.

Recommendation

That you review and approve the minutes.

Agree RMK Disagree _____

Attachment

Tab A NSPG Minutes, December 17, 1984

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White House Guidelines, August 28, 1997
By dlr NARA, Date 12/4/00