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September 21, 1973

FOR: S/S - Mr. Pickering

Tom:

I suggest that you tightly restrict distribu-  
tion of the attached.

Ken asked for the memo (presumably for his own  
records) despite the fact that he was, of course,  
present at the meeting.

[Signature]  
Seymour Weiss

DEF 18-7

Attachment:  
Information Memorandum  
SALT Verification Panel Meeting  
September 19, 1973

**NODIS REVIEW**  
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 By JS NARA Date 1/6/99

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
 INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

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E/S B

To : The Acting Secretary

SEP 21 1973

From : PM - Seymour Weiss *W*

SALT Verification Panel Meeting  
September 19, 1973

The meeting opened with a CIA briefing on recent intelligence developments. There was a discussion of the new Soviet MIRVed ICBMs and the requirements, if any, to modify existing ICBM silos to accommodate them. CIA believed that modifications would be required for the new smaller ICBMs (SS-X-17 and SS-X-19) and that a new silo would be required for the large ICBM (SS-X-18). (NOTE: I subsequently learned that the CIA position is not wholly shared by DIA and that a memorandum is being prepared from Mr. Schlesinger to Dr. Kissinger expressing reservations about the confidence that we can have in the need for silo modification to accept the new missiles.)

Dr. Kissinger expressed what he understood to be the consensus, namely that the US should not advance a new SALT position at this stage, but should wait for a Soviet response to our Provisional MIRV Agreement--which he was reasonably sure would be negative. It was necessary therefore, for the US to be thinking seriously of where we wished to go in SALT.

A general discussion ensued which touched, but only briefly, on the five alternative partial MIRV measures developed by the NSC Working Group. Admiral Zumwalt, representing the Chairman, JCS, did not find any of these alternatives acceptable, since, in his judgment, they were not adequately verifiable. Others felt that the verification question was still open and could not be resolved on the basis of presently available data. Dr. Kissinger expressed concern that if we are unable to limit Soviet MIRVs that, because of their greater throw-weight, they would eventually out-match us in this important category.

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2.

Dr. Kissinger noted that the intelligence indicates that Soviet MIRVs are being developed only on the new missiles and that based upon the CIA briefing, modifications to existing silos will apparently be required to accommodate them. If so, this could be a source of verification. He emphasized that any MIRV proposal would have to be the upper limit for deployment of these new missiles. We could not permit these new systems to be deployed in excess of the MIRV limit even if they were deployed with a single warhead because of verification considerations. He thought that this could be beneficial in terms of reductions. Rather than replacing SS-9s or SS-11s as they become obsolete, these missiles could be retired as a reduction measure. Thus, the US and USSR MIRV levels and launcher levels would be moving towards one another over time.

Ambassador Johnson thought that with respect to the MIRV issue we needed to determine first what MIRV limits would be in our interest, followed by an assessment of their verifiability and what price we might be willing to pay for them. He stated that he would find it valuable to have an expression of the priority which the US placed on achieving alternative MIRV bans, e.g. a ban on MIRVed MLBMs as contrasted to a ban on MIRVed small ICBMs.

There was general recognition of the need to put pressure on the Soviets to slow down their strategic programs and to dissuade them from seeking an advantage in SALT. Most agreed that the Soviets would not respond to vague or empty threats, although Ambassador Johnson thought it important to get the Soviets to understand that the US would not accept inferiority and that US reaction to Soviet attempts to achieve such a goal could cause the pendulum of US public attitudes to swing in the other direction, i.e., witness the US Apollo program. In a sense, the Soviet appreciation of the volatility of US public opinion could be used as leverage.

All agreed that the Soviets would be most influenced by concrete on-going programs. Dr. Kissinger doubted that we could get any new major programs from the Congress at this time. In a recent meeting between the President and key Senators who deal with defense matters, they believed the Administration would achieve a great triumph if the present programs are not emasculated.

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3.

Amiral Zumwalt suggested a Presidential letter to the Congress saying that we are not making satisfactory progress in SALT and asking the Congress to support new programs which will give us the necessary leverage. Dr. Kissinger reacted negatively to this proposition, noting that we had recently signed a declaration with the Soviets calling for the two sides to negotiate a SALT agreement next year. He did not think the President would accept such a proposal at this time, even before the Soviets rejected our present proposal. Mr. Colby among others suggested that the Soviets would not accept what we deemed to be an equitable position unless pressure was brought to bear. One suggestion was that our superior technology and especially our ability to develop a hard target capability represented such leverage. Mr. Clements argued that we could develop programs, not excessively costly, for larger warheads, greater accuracy and cruise missiles all of which would exert pressure. Mr. Nitze agreed as to the need for leverage pointing out that at the end of the last session at Geneva the Soviets in effect stated to Ambassador Johnson that events (presumably the momentum of their programs combined with the lack thereof in the US) would force us to accept an agreement asymmetrically in their favor. Mr. Nitze favored a phase down of SS-9's. Dr. Kissinger questioned the negotiability of an SS-9 reduction without the US paying an appropriate price. Dr. Ikle and Mr. Weiss, while supporting the logic and equity of the Soviets accepting no more than parity with the US in major measures of strategic systems, believed that bombers would have to be included in throw-weight calculations.

Mr. Rush emphasized the need to make a realistic try to get the Soviets to accept significant reductions and a ban on MIRV testing. Failing this, we would have made our case on the record and could get public and Congressional support for offsetting American programs. He did not believe we had much chance of getting the Soviets to give up anything until they are confronted with US programs which they will find uncomfortable and will wish to stop.

Dr. Kissinger thought it useful to examine the probable trends in the strategic programs of ourselves and the Soviets, to examine their strategic implications, and then determine what we should seek to negotiate as a reasonable US position.

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4.

In this connection he asked the Working Group to provide alternative negotiating packages which might be considered. A Working Group meeting to begin this work is scheduled for tomorrow.

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Drafted: S/PC:FP<sup>2</sup>Perez/PM:SWeiss:bpw  
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