

At the time I assumed the job of Chief of Naval Operations on 1 July 1970, the United States was in the second of the seven SALT phases which preceded the May 1972, treaty and interim agreement. This phase had begun on April 16, 1970, and lasted until August 14, 1970, a period of 120 days, and was the second longest of the series and the most episodic. It took place at Vienna. The U. S. had gone into this phase with a program that consisted of four major options: Option A, in which no U. S. program was inhibited, MIRV's were permitted and 12 safeguard sites were authorized in the ABM field, and then Options B, C, and D, each of which provided for anti-ballistic missile sites to be zero or NCA only, this was a SOP to Moscow who had advocated zero or NCA at SALT-1. These ABM options had been designed as tradeoffs to get Moscow to agree to an offensive missile ceiling with 250 or, as a fall-back, a 300 limit on SS-9's. All four of the options provided for 1,710 ballistic missiles for both sides (this permitting the U. S. to retain its 1,054 ICBM's and its 656 SORM's) and bombers to remain at existing levels. Options A and B were called low and C and D were called high. Only Option C banned MIRV's; D called for there to be 1,710 ballistic missiles at the outset but dropping to 1,000 by 1978, at the rate of 100 per year. All of these options permitted freedom to mix one-way; that is, either

side could take land-based missiles to sea, and each option had 11 collateral constraints which prevented improvement in the capabilities of both sides. These four options had been briefed on 16 March to the major Congressional leadership by the President with key members of his advisors present, and when the President had come down in favor of Options C and D as his choices, he received a great deal of praise from the leadership which indicated that there was support for the kind of an option that would reduce our total armament.

On the tenth of April, 1970, an NSDM-51, the President had announced that Option C - the option to ban MIRV - would be put forward first, and Option D - which required reductions - would be put forward second, and that the NCA would be put forward first on the defensive side with zero sites as the second choice, but actually zero preferred.

With regard to the problem of verification of a MIRV ban which would have been required if Option C had been approved, the suggestion that it would be by national means stayed in the paper dealing with these options up until it reached the National Security Council. There it was broadened to include a requirement that there be on-site inspections to verify that MIRV bans were

being obeyed. This action angered the bureaucracy a great deal, within the arms control community, which considered that this was almost a last chance to achieve a ban on MIRV, with the U. S. about to conclude its own MIRV testing and about to deploy Minuteman III in June of 1970, and Poseidon seven months later. This bureaucracy felt that the requirement for an onsite inspection, known to be an anathema to the Soviets, loaded the option in such a way that it would be unacceptable to the Soviets as an option. There was even some thought that the President had made the decision to load Option C in this way to make a MIRV ban unacceptable to the Soviets, or that Kissinger might have done so as a compromise to get JCS support for higher options. At that time, the Central Intelligence Agency, the State Department, and the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency had favored national means and had favored accepting the risks on the theory that at some point cheating with regard to a MERV ban would be caught, but the JCS position prior to my arrival had been against it.

All of these arguments first begged the basic question is whether even onsite inspection of the kind that either side would plausibly permit could detect MIRV cheating, since a MIRV program packaged in a missile would be very hard to detect without the most detailed and scientific examination.

Soon after the SALT-II had begun in Vienna, the Soviets had rejected Option 3, the MIRV ban, at the outset without even exploring whether or not the U. S. was willing to drop the requirement for an onsite inspection to make it acceptable to us, with a clear signal that the Soviets had every intention of going forward with MIRV tests themselves and wanted to have MIRV's in order to capitalize on their larger throw-weight of their missiles. During my earlier two visits back to Washington, I had detected a certain amount of optimism within the Administration about the prospect of negotiating strategic arms limitations with the Soviets, however, by the time I took the job the Soviets had already rejected Option C and, in a single day, rejected Option D, which was the proposal to reduce total numbers of ballistic missiles; the Soviets taking the position that both Options C and D were just the United States taking one-sided positions for its own advantage. Option C, the Soviets felt, was the U. S. effort to freeze permanently their inferiority and to add insult to injury by demanding onsite inspections to check this inferiority, whereas to them they suggested that D appeared to reduce the Soviets greatest advantage and force them to C where the U. S. had advantages; this latter because at the time the 1,710 limit was put forward, the Soviets had the preponderance of their strategic missiles in land-based systems.

On the other hand, the Soviets had accepted the NCA on the defensive side within a week and then concentrated on being ambiguous themselves while awaiting "the real" U. S. positions.

The deal that was X-stamped at the time that I returned to Washington which had been accepted by the Soviets - that is, that they could retain their Moscow site under the "NCA Option" while the U. S. safeguard was limited - was so good that it was one that they might well have come up with themselves, and I think that there was general agreement within the JCS at the time I took over that it was what Newhouse in "Cold Dawn" came to refer to as "intellectual blunder," designed to provide symmetry which would carry over into the offensive arena and which, of course, was later abandoned in that arena.

Also, before I took over, the U. S., after the Soviets accepted the NCA, then pressed the Soviets to return to a zero ABM, referring back to the discussions that had taken place in SALT-1 as the rationale, and the U. S. delegation had been considerably needled by the Soviets for having changed its mind to go from one to zero and finally back to four sites. The SALT Delegation was back in Washington when I returned for a major review. The JCS had re-addressed eight SALT issues which had been wrapped up on 22 June 1970, and a major review was going on in the Verification Panel beginning 24 June,

so that the basic JCS positions which I inherited when I became a member of that corporate body were based on that 22 June 1970 position paper and these positions were that land mobile ICBM's should be banned, that there should be no restrictions with regard to the mix between land-based and sea-based systems and that the U. S. should maintain the right to have 250 of the MLBM's, equivalent to the huge Soviet SS-9's. The JCS opposed a limitation on strategic bombers and air defenses and said that if they were forced to count bombers within the aggregate limits of strategic vehicles that we should use 430 bombers added to the 1,710 ballistic missiles to get the aggregate total. With regard to MR and IRBM missiles, we stated that these should be excluded from the agreement if the Soviets excluded their limitations on forward-based systems. The JCS endorsed limitations on submarine-launched, cruise missiles, of which the Navy had none and the Soviet Navy had a great many, and they proclaimed that the lighter (TAC) aircraft deployed overseas were outside the scope of any strategic arms limitations and again said that we should exclude the Soviet MR and IRBM's if the Soviets would exclude our forward-based systems, including TAC aircraft. I met with Paul Nitze during the period prior to my 1 July takeover and he expressed very strong concern that the optimism felt within the Administration in general about the prospect of SALT negotiations was unjustified. It was his

view that the only basis for optimism about concluding negotiations was under the assumption that the United States would continue to erode its positions until they became undesirable from the U. S. point of view and acceptable to the Soviets. Within four days after I took over the Chief of Naval Operations and became a member of the JCS, Mr. Nixon, on the fourth of July, signed NSDM-61. This provided, in addition to the four options I have previously outlined, a fifth option - Option E - which was written in the White House by Henry Kissinger and his staff, was not shown to the Department of Defense and was, according to the NSC Staff, designed not to be acceptable to all agencies in Washington but rather to be one that would be negotiable. It called for no ban on MIRV's, no reductions in ballistic missiles. It, therefore, specified an aggregate total of 1,900 which would not require the Soviets to reduce any but would, after allowing for the 1,054 U. S. ICBM's and 656 U. S. SLEM's, leave only 190 B-52's out of the 500 B-52's then in the operating forces. (There was a plan over the years to come down to 250.) This number of 190 gave equality of bombers to both sides but in addition, of course, the Soviets retained their 250 very large SS-9's. This NSDM-69 was subsequently modified on 22 July 1970, by NSDM-73, and placed in the form of a formal proposal by NSDM-74 on 31 July, and was actually presented to the Russians at Vienna on the fourth of August, 1970.

One of the remarkable aspects with regard to Option E, which suggests that Henry Kissinger was at that point aware that he was pulling a fast one, is that Congressional leaders were not briefed on it although the Allies were.

Things were moving fairly rapidly for a new member on the JCS block and my participation in the balance of this SALT II phase was minimal. My records indicate that we did not deal with it in my first JCS meeting on the sixth of July, but that on the tenth there was an expression of concern as to the leaks in the Washington Post on the SALT negotiations. Chalmers Roberts had reported fairly accurately on the Presidential decision in the 4 July NSDM, the memorandum attached to which was dated 9 July. At that 10 July meeting it was noted that the total of 1,900 strategic vehicles in the NSDM was a couple of hundred less than what the JCS's had recommended, and also mentioned that the Russians had been given some evidence of wanting to stop talking at Vienna and take their summer vacation and if they gave indication of wanting to quit too soon, Ambassador Smith had been authorized to tell Semenov that the U. S. was just about to present a new package. By 13 July the JCS's were concerned that the subject NSDM had been worded in such a way that a reduction in bombers was required and that no new silos could be constructed. The latter point was especially serious since it denied the U. S. the opportunity of the two-way flow to build large megatonnage missiles like the SS-9, while at the same

time forcing the United States to give up its superiority in bomber megatonnage.

Admiral Moorer noted at that meeting that he had been able to get briefing gardens

to the NATO countries changed to provide information acceptable to the JCS con-

cerning the problems with bombers and with two-way flow. July 17, Admiral

Moorer expressed concern about the Soviets trying to give the picture to the

world of being allied with the United States, while at the same time we noted

that the NATO Council was apprehensive over the omission of MRBM's from NSDM-69.