

RICE-ZUMWALT SALT DISCUSSION

- R. Probably, especially you, also partly the Chiefs as a whole, were nearly as involved or analytical about SALT at this point as you were, say two years later. From the point of view of just constructing a narrative, it would be nice to get that dynamic recorded.
- Z. If you review my 69-page paper, you will see that I had a very fine-tuned awareness of the intricacies of arms control negotiations. I think that already, the day I took over, I was probably more intellectually interested in the problem than anyone except Admiral Moorer. The others never did really develop an interest in it, and really kind of considered it a collateral problem: General Ryan, because he was an operator and not a planner and analyzer; and General Westmoreland and General Chapman, because they have no strategic systems to speak of. In truth, General Chapman was probably more interested in it than either General Ryan or General Westmoreland, just because he's more of a scholar. But it's also true that I felt ignorant with regard to where we were at in those early days, with regard to the discussions going on in SALT, and this NSDM I'm sure concerned me because I was well aware of how bad it can be not to have the Chiefs on board from my Test Ban days, and I'm sure that I made a mental note that I had to get on top of it but I didn't proceed to do anything dramatic about it at that time.

R. You were also pressed for time, right? You were doing 17 other things, right?

Z. That's right. I didn't stop spending a lot of time each day on project 60, I didn't stop spending a lot of time on personnel initiatives, but I did arrange to get the G&O Executive Panel organized with some bright strategic minds on it whom I had known from my arms control days - Albert Wolfstедder, Fred Hoffman, Tom Wolf - people like that, who would be competent to work with me in the months ahead for what I visualized would be a long, slow negotiation.

- - - - Garbled question and answer here - - - -

Z. You know, the theory of this review business that you would collect in a world half destroyed enough information to figure out what missiles were left and re-target them and, of course, that would never happen. General Holloway was Commander of SAC as well as Commander of the Joint Strategic Targeting System, and traditionally SAC is kind of the world's best operator, and the JSTPS thing is considered a collateral duty. It really ought, probably, to be separated and brought to Washington and I advocated that several times but could never get it approved because it was too controversial and was considered to be taking the Air Force on too much.

Now, we all shared the concern that Admiral Moorer is quoted as expressing on 7 August, when he said the Chiefs should familiarize themselves with Option E

and reported that he had told SEC DEF and the President that he felt that we must retain the option for the U. S. to go for the larger 250 cubic meter ICBM's, and that he did not like talk of dismantling bombers. It reminded him too much of the Disarmament Agreements in '22. The basic point there was that we had given the Russians two breaks in that Option that we had denied ourselves and that did cause us all concern.

R. They didn't know exactly how to do it. Maybe they didn't realize the full extent of the blockades in the White House or whatever it was that...

Z. I think that the problem that the Joint Chiefs faced was that although we knew that the law said that we were all co-equal, and that the President should be consulting with us as a group, it had already been demonstrated during General Wheeler's tenure that only the Chairman had frequent access to the President. It had also been fairly well established that the written JCSM's, which were our expression of views, were only getting to the Secretary of Defense and that anything about those views that got to the President was either when SEC DEF talked to him or Kissinger talked to him or the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs talked to him.

R. So, it was clear to you from the very beginning, or didn't you really appreciate it?

Z. I think that with regard to the strategic business, that was clear at the very beginning. I think that I had at the outset greater aspirations or made more unwise assumptions about the ability that I would have to communicate with the President on the conventional maritime balance and what the Navy was doing.

So, the Chiefs as a group tended to feel that out of the formal written documents and the bull sessions that we had together, Admiral Moorer was getting himself steeped in our corporate wisdom and guidance so that he could represent us in the discussions. I think that Admiral Moorer, in turn, for the first year or two, probably didn't realize how much Henry was using him just to de-fuse the Joint Chiefs, and picking and choosing what he would report to the President of the JCS views.

R. Did he realize how little of what the Joint Chiefs said was getting through the Secretary of Defense?

Z. I don't think that Admiral Moorer sensed for about the first year that there was a schism between Mel Laird and Henry Kissinger. It was probably about in the second year of my watch that that began to be apparent.

R. Well, that was one of the things I meant when I asked whether Moorer's own newness at the job of Chairman impeded his effectiveness.

Z. Yes, a better answer to that would be with regard to his acuity on

the bureaucratic things, yes, it did affect his performance: with regard to his knowledge of the substance, no.

R.awareness of you and the Chiefs in general of what bureaucratic things are going to have to be done in order to get your views broadcast, and since the White House was not going to entertain them, get them before Congress, get them before the public, get them without at the same time being disloyal, or you know, not following orders.

Z. You see, my own view, Bob, is that we probably can rely better on the JCS notes and the memoranda for record than we can on my recollection, with regard to the nuances in my perception, because for about two years I have had a very negative impression of Kissinger and the President. For the first two years it started off going from outstanding to gradually deteriorating, and I think we'll pick up the nuances of that and we will have to rely on the papers better than my memory.

R. I think the papers begin to show it. The bottom of this stack is that the Chiefs are being much more analytical and critical than they are at the top of the stack.

Z. And I'm playing a much heavier role...

R. I think so, although it's very hard to tell some of these things: who's

doing the talking and where.....but this is still only to the end of

December '71. Maybe we can cruise some more...