The original documents are located in Box 2, folder: "NSC Meeting, 7/30/1976" of the National Security Adviser's NSC Meeting File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

~~TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE~~ - XGDS

MINUTES
NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING

DATE: Friday, July 30, 1976

TIME: 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

PLACE: Cabinet Room, The White House

SUBJECT: SALT

Principals

The President
Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger
Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld
Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General George S. Brown
The Director of Central Intelligence George Bush
Acting Director of Arms Control and Disarmament Agency John Lehman
Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs Brent Scowcroft

Other Attendees

White House: Mr. Richard Cheney, Assistant to the President
Mr. William G. Hyland, Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs

State: Ambassador U. Alexis Johnson
Mr. Helmut Sonnenfeldt

Defense: Dr. James P. Wade

NSC Staff: Col Richard T. Boverie

~~TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE~~ - XGDS (B) (3)
Classified by Brent Scowcroft

President Ford: This is the meeting that was to have been held last week. I want to emphasize that it is decidedly in the national interest to proceed to seek a good agreement for SALT TWO. There is no urgency to dictate a bad agreement. But there is no reason to avoid negotiations for what I take to be essential for the national interest.

We have proceeded since Vladivostok with a number of attempts and several different formulas. However, we have not been able to move because of the Backfire and cruise missile problems. We have to be cognizant that we are moving closer to the deadline. If the US government gets to that deadline with no action, serious consequences could result. Regardless of any political problems, I think we should proceed affirmatively.

Henry, would you please review the alternatives that have been suggested.

Secretary Kissinger: Mr. President, it would be helpful if we review where the negotiations have been and what the Verification Panel has discussed.

Last September, we introduced the idea of treating sea-based cruise missiles and Backfire as hybrid or gray areas. We proposed a common limit of 300 hybrid systems on the two sides -- for the Soviets, Backfires and SLCMs (submarine launched cruise missiles) up to 2000 kilometers in range, and for us, FB-111s and SLCMs up to 2000 kilometers. The effect would have been for the Soviets to forego cruise missiles if they wanted a full complement of Backfire. That proposal also included a limit of 300 heavy bombers equipped with ALCMs (air launched cruise missiles) up to 2500 kilometers in range.

Brezhnev rejected that proposal in October. He rejected it with respect to the numbers and with respect to treating Backfire as a hybrid.

Secretary Rumsfeld: Did he reject the concept of hybrid systems? Was the concept of hybrid as we talk about it rejected?

Secretary Kissinger: Yes. He used the word hybrid.

Secretary Rumsfeld: Did he reject hybrid or was he referring simply to the Backfire?

Secretary Kissinger: They said that Backfire was not in SALT, and that cruise missiles over 600 kilometers were to be covered. This was their basic decision.

In January we proposed to them the following:

-- Counting all Backfire produced after October 1977 in the 2400 aggregate.

-- Counting heavy bombers with 600-2500 kilometer ALCMs in the 1320 MIRV ceiling.

-- Banning submarine SLCMs over 600 kilometers in range.

-- Banning land-based cruise missiles and surface-ship cruise missiles over 2500 kilometers.

-- Counting each surface-ship armed with 600-2500 kilometer SLCMs in the 1320 MIRV ceiling.

Brezhnev insisted that the Backfire was not a strategic bomber and supplied some numbers to support his contention.

President Ford: Was this in Brezhnev's letter?

Secretary Kissinger: No. He said this in Moscow.

President Ford: And in Helsinki.

Secretary Kissinger: Yes, but more specifically in Moscow.

We then proposed a tougher version of the fallback you had approved.

President Ford: Was this in February?

Secretary Kissinger: No, this was in Moscow in January.

It included a five-year agreement limiting Backfire to 275 aircraft through 1982. The number of surface-ships equipped with 600-2500 kilometer SLCMs would be limited to a ceiling of 25 within this same five year period. The other provisions of the proposals were as we had originally proposed except that we also proposed reductions to less than 2300 by 1982.

Brezhnev did not reject our position but offered a counterproposal which remains the present Soviet position:

-- He accepted our approach on the ALCMs -- to treat them as MIRVed vehicles with the exception of wanting to count the B-1 as three MIRVed vehicles. I am certain his proposal on the B-1 was not serious. He accepted our proposal for defining a heavy missile on the basis of throw weight. He offered to give a written commitment that Backfire would not be given a capability against the US. He reiterated their position that all SLCMs and land-launched cruise missiles should be limited to 600 kilometers. He offered to consider reductions to a level even below 2300, if there were a satisfactory solution to the cruise missile issue. All of their concessions on MIRV counting and throw weight are dependent upon resolution of the cruise missile issue. These are not independent concessions.

We considered the Brezhnev position in February and we came up with a proposal using a different approach -- more like last September. It includes:

-- All provisions relating to Vladivostok agreed to this far in Geneva plus other agreed joint draft text provisions.

-- Agreement that any missile whose booster has been tested with MIRVs will consider to be MIRVed.

-- Ceiling on the throw weight and launch weight of heavy and non-heavy ICBMs.

-- Ban on ALCMs with range over 2500 kilometers, restrict ALCMs over 600 kilometers to deployment only on heavy bombers, count heavy bombers equipped with 600-2500 kilometer ALCMs in the 1320 total.

-- Reduction in the aggregate to some level below 2400.

Some of these provisions had been discussed in January. In addition, we proposed an interim agreement to last to January 1979:

-- Limit testing of SLCMs (on surface-ships and submarines) and LLCMs (land-launched cruise missiles) to a maximum of 2500 kilometers.

-- Ban deployment of SLCMs and LLCMs over 600 kilometers.

-- Prohibit acceleration of Backfire production beyond the current and agreed rate.

-- Ban on improvements in Backfire capability.

-- Commitment to resolve the Backfire and cruise missile issues as soon as possible.

In March, this approach was also rejected by Brezhnev. He characterized the US proposal as moving backward from our position in January; in particular, he criticized the withdrawal of our proposal for a 600 kilometer limit on submarine SLCMs. He claimed it was unrealistic to think it would be easier to ban long-range cruise missiles after they had been tested and even produced.

Since then, in effect, there have been no communications between us. Dobrynin has asked us if in principle we are ready to continue negotiations. We said yes. Also Alex (Johnson) has been negotiating in Geneva on technical issues. But there has been no momentum on the fundamental proposals.

The Verification Panel has been looking at alternatives and has come up with two basic approaches.

The first approach is to maintain the February position. We could do this in two ways: either by saying nothing, or by writing Brezhnev a letter, which is a more formal approach. The argument for maintaining the February position is that the Soviets will not give it serious consideration unless we stick to our position.

The second approach would be to maintain our February position but add some variations to make the concept more attractive.

For example, we could extend the ban on ALCMs over 2500 kilometers in the Vladivostok agreement to cover all cruise missiles in the permanent agreement. This would assure the Soviets that regardless of the outcome of the follow-on negotiations, there would be a ban on SLCMs and land-launched cruise missiles over 2500 kilometers. An argument against this is that it might reduce our leverage in follow-on negotiations. If we don't add a ban, it would leave Backfire and most cruise missiles out altogether and save them for SALT THREE.

Another variation is to extend the period of the Interim Agreement which now goes to January 1979. It is unlikely any agreement would be ratified until March 1977. Therefore, an Interim Agreement to January 1979 would not be extraordinarily meaningful. So we could extend it to October 1980, which would be a period of three years after the entry into force of the Vladivostok Agreement to negotiate follow-on limitations on Backfire and sea- and land-launched cruise missiles.

This would have more of an impact on the US SLCM program since initial deployment is currently scheduled for early 1980.

The argument against this variation is that once we have any kind of ban, it tends to become permanent. We might find the SLCM in Congress to be in the same situation as the B-1.

President Ford: This one item -- including a ban on all cruise missiles greater than 2500 kilometers -- how does that differ from the February proposal?

Secretary Kissinger: The February proposal included a ban only on ALCMs over 2500 kilometers. Here we have added the ban to all cruise missiles. It might make it more serious if we stick to the concept since it is an elaboration of the concept. It leaves open whether SLCMs from 600 to 2500 kilometers could be deployed. They could not be deployed up to the limit of the Interim Agreement.

Secretary Rumsfeld: Which variation on the February proposal are you talking about?

Secretary Kissinger: Variation 1 of the February proposal.

Secretary Rumsfeld: But that puts it into a permanent limit.

Secretary Kissinger: In the Interim Agreement nothing can be deployed beyond 600 kilometers until day X. At the end of the Interim Agreement, 600-2500 kilometer SLCMs can be deployed.

Ambassador Johnson: The Interim Agreement went to 1979.

Secretary Kissinger: In the February proposal, there would be a permanent agreement on agreed items, and an Interim Agreement on those not agreed.

What this adds is whatever happens after the Interim Agreement, we could not deploy cruise missiles beyond 2500 kilometers.

President Ford: Maybe I don't understand this, but if we go with this, we go from 600 to 2500 kilometers on SLCMs. How would that be a benefit to the Soviets?

Secretary Kissinger: We won't go beyond 2500 kilometers for any purpose. If we go the reductions route, or any or all of the modifications, we have to consider what happens at the end of the Interim Agreement.

Ambassador Johnson: May I point out Mr. President, that we do have an agreement in Geneva that provides for follow-on negotiations in 1977.

Secretary Kissinger: That's why we would drop the Interim Agreement. We would settle what we can settle and then go into follow-on negotiations. If we have an Interim Agreement, we might have trouble funding our systems. And once the Interim Agreement lapses, we would be back to where we were.

Our other principal option would be to go for reductions. This alternative would give us the opportunity to build on where the negotiations left off in mid January. We would propose to include reductions to 2150 by 1982, and to include reduction of 100 SS-9s on the Soviet side.

If they reduced heavy missiles, we would fall off our demand for strict numerical limits on Backfire; however, there would be a letter from Brezhnev to you on what their program is.

We would also take Brezhnev up on his offer to give us assurances that Backfire would not be given an intercontinental capability and we might also seek other collateral constraints.

The cruise missile limitations would be similar to our January discussion. SLCMs over 600 kilometers on submarines are banned, but permitted on surface-ships and land up to 2500 kilometers in range; ALCMs on heavy bombers are counted as MIRVs and banned on other aircraft.

We would also like to get a freeze on SS-18 deployment so that all of their permitted heavy missiles would not be MIRVed. If the freeze were effective as of the end of this year, after a reduction of 100 they would be left with about 134 SS-18s and about 92 SS-9s, but in the more likely case of a freeze in October 1977 they would have about 188 SS-18s and about 20 SS-9s.

The practical difference between the reductions option and the February proposal is that if we add a 2500 kilometer test and deployment ban, under February there would be an unlimited number of SLCMs greater than 600 kilometers -- but no constraints on Backfire and no reductions beyond 2400.

Summing up, we have to consider where we would be in either of the two approaches as well as the case of no agreement:

-- If we stick with the last proposal, we would thereby be betting that after five months of deadlock, Brezhnev will switch his position. If we want to string out the negotiations, then this probably guarantees it. It has the virtue of displaying our refusal to budge; if the talks collapse we could defend it; if we add the 2500 kilometer range limit for all cruise missiles, particularly through 1980, we have to compare whether this outcome is better than the reductions option.

In the reductions option, we could deploy longer range ship-based missiles but in the Interim Agreement approach we could not; Backfire would reach 270 by October 1980, while running free in the reductions proposal, but the total Backfire in 1980 would be about the same, because production will not increase until late in 1980.

In short, the Interim Agreement may not buy us much. Thus we could consider dropping it altogether -- but this approach is likely to be strongly resisted by the Soviets; Backfire runs free, but all we obtain compared to the reductions option is the freedom to deploy SLCMs on submarines.

The reductions option has what most critics have wanted for SALT THREE, namely low level reductions, and throw weight reductions.

Our forces would not be severely affected at the 2150 level, but the Soviets would have to take down over 400 missiles and bombers; CIA estimates they would reduct about 225 ICBMs, 128 SLCMs, and 70 bombers. To be realistic, however, we should recognize that the Soviets might accept reductions, but will resist specific reductions of heavy missiles. They will not let us specify the category of reductions.

These are the principal options. However, none will emerge pure from negotiations.

President Ford: Alex (Johnson), where are you on the technical discussions?

Ambassador Johnson: We have reached substantial agreement on heavy missiles. We have reached substantial agreement on a cap on heavy missiles. We have reached substantial agreement on throw weight.

We have spent much time on MIRV verification. As a quick word, the issue is not so much whether a missile tested as a MIRV is a MIRV. The issue now raised by the Soviets is how to count launchers. Their view is that we count these on a one-by-one basis. Our view is that this is impractical and we say that all launchers must be counted.

Secretary Kissinger: They have already agreed to the MIRV counting rule.

Ambassador Johnson: They have agreed that once a missile is tested as a MIRV, it will be counted as a MIRV. But the problem is to construct a bridge from the missile to the launcher in the field.

President Ford: My understanding was that where they were to have 300 SS-18s, they had planned to MIRV only 120, but they would count all SS-18s as MIRVed.

Ambassador Johnson: If SS-18s are there in the launchers. The problem is the bridge to count all launchers as containing SS-18 missiles. We formerly thought that they agreed to a group/complex rule, but they have walked away from that.

Secretary Kissinger: They can deploy the SS-18 without modifying the silo.

Ambassador Johnson: The SS-18 is not as much an issue as is the SS-19.

Secretary Kissinger: They can't put unMIRVed SS-19s in SS-18 launchers and count them as unMIRVed. In any event, the MIRV counting rule depends upon resolution of the cruise missile issue.

Secretary Kissinger: If they say they have an SS-11 in a hole, and if they admit it is an SS-19 hole, they cannot claim it as a single RV.

Ambassador Johnson: If they say they have an SS-11 in an SS-19 hole, they want to say that it is not counted as a MIRV launcher.

Secretary Kissinger: My instinct is that if we settle the cruise missile issue, the counting rule will be settled.

Ambassador Johnson: The Soviets have also shown a willingness to talk about the data base. I believe this will be manageable.

President Ford: Don?

Secretary Rumsfeld: What are people's views on going to Geneva with the mobile ICBM issue? We have agreed that the land mobile is not to be banned, but it has not been to Geneva yet.

Ambassador Johnson: Not yet. The draft treaty says it is okay to have land mobile missiles. Their position is to ban ICBMs on aircraft other than bombers -- that is air-mobile ICBMs. Their position is silent on land-mobile missiles. They have not rejected them, but they have not accepted them either.

Secretary Rumsfeld: It will take time to settle this. At some point we should tell them our views. We should also address another issue: cruise missile definition -- unarmed, nuclear armed, armed.

President Ford: What is your point?

Secretary Rumsfeld: We here have a definition. The issue is: when is it appropriate to get work going in Geneva on this, since it will take time to resolve. It is best to get working on this.

Ambassador Johnson: With regard to mobile missiles, we will encounter some resistance on air-mobile ICBMs.

Secretary Kissinger: If we introduce these issues without answering the basic questions, they will just stall. I've never understood the point on cruise missiles: why do we want conventional cruise missiles over 2500 kilometers? I don't understand the point.

General Brown: 600 kilometers.

Secretary Kissinger: 2500 on aircraft. If we open up possible evasions of specifications and propose calling missiles conventional and then put nuclear warheads on them, we will have problems. The NSC should consider this more carefully. Why start a brawl on that before we settle the other more fundamental issues?

Secretary Rumsfeld: We can't predict how the Soviets will react. They might consider it a positive sign, feeling that this is a signal that we are seriously interested.

President Ford: I would like a paper, with pros and cons, on this issue. I will decide whether to submit it to Geneva or not. When can you get such a paper, Brent?

Brent Scowcroft: Early next week.

President Ford: George (Brown), I understand the Chiefs recommend washing out all previous submissions other than February.

General Brown: Yes, sir. It is time for the Chiefs to be on record, since the JCS have not done anything in writing for a year. Senator Jackson hit me on this hard. There are three things:

-- We believe we should clean the slate of proposals prior to the February proposal.

-- We believe we should capture the Backfire, with the cruise missile providing the necessary leverage. We think we should emphasize to the Soviets that our approach to these negotiations has been through comprehensive package proposals. They have been taking selected items from the package, not the package itself.

-- We believe we should stay with the February proposal.

Listening to the discussions this morning, it could well be seen that every time we reach a hard point we give something more to the Soviets. But the February proposal was tougher than the January proposal.

President Ford: Why was February tougher than January?

General Brown: Since it had some constraints on Backfire -- but the January fallback did not.

President Ford: But January had reductions from 2400 to 2150 or 2200.

General Brown: That was the fallback.

President Ford: I understand in the two proposals the only thing that differs is the 2500 kilometer limit.

Secretary Kissinger: The major difference is that the February proposal removes the 600 kilometer limit on submarine launched SLCMs. The practical consequence of this is that after 1979 the Backfire, SLCM, and LLCM run free.

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President Ford: George (Brown), what is the significant difference from a military point of view?

General Brown: The January proposal counts the SLCM on surface-ships in the 1320 MIRV limit.

President Ford: But you have no real program to put SLCMs on surface-ships.

General Brown: But we have a capability to achieve more than double the 25 ships in the proposal.

President Ford: When?

Dr. Wade: Probably not until after 1985. We have no program for this.

President Ford: Do we have any shipbuilding program for this?

Secretary Rumsfeld: The Chiefs and Services have looked hard at this. There had not been a specific IOC or doctrine.

President Ford: Is there a military desirability for that doctrine? If no doctrine is developed, how can there be a significant difference?

Dr. Wade: In the shipbuilding study which we briefed you on earlier, we identified this as an add-on to the heavy carrier force. It would be an add-on for the capital ships, not the carriers themselves. We are looking into their use in theater warfare, anti-ship warfare, and as augmentation for tactical aircraft. We have requested R&D money for this and we are now focusing on this.

President Ford: It seems like such a vague concept -- to say it is significantly different. George says it is different. I hear a lot of words, but I see nothing in writing -- no concept.

General Brown: But in the January fallback position, we were limited to 25 ships.

Mr. Hyland: It was proposed in January.

Secretary Rumsfeld: The President asked distinction between the January and February proposal.

Secretary Kissinger: It was part of the five year Interim Agreement. You said there was no way to have more than 25 ships through 1982.

General Brown: We said we had no program.

Secretary Kissinger: We were talking about through 1982, not 1985.

Dr. Lehman: Dr. Ikle feels that the most important impact is not military but the flexibility and leverage for future negotiations on grey area systems, and the freedom for theater deployments.

President Ford: This is confusing. The Arms Control and Disarmament Agency is arguing military strategy.

Dr. Lehman: No. We feel the whole grey area cannot be settled in an asymmetrical way.

Secretary Rumsfeld: If we look at this incrementally, if our goal is to get a grip on systems like these, and specifically the Backfire, the theory is that we made a decision to count the bombers with ALCMs in the 1320 limit in an attempt to get a hold on the Backfire. And we have made other attempts to get a hold on the Backfire. But as we look at the charts, we see that pieces of our leverage are moving away. They have dissipated. Incrementally, not any one piece is significant, but the cumulative effect is.

Secretary Kissinger: We have three basic prospects over the next 10 years.

We can have no agreement and the race starts at 2580 for the Soviets and 2150 for us. Cruise missiles and Backfire go unconstrained.

We could also stick with the February proposal for an aggregate of 2400. ALCMs would be limited to 2500 kilometers. After 1979, my prediction will be that SLCMs and Backfire will be unconstrained.

Under a reductions agreement, the aggregate would be 2150 or 2200. Backfire would be unconstrained, but we would have assurances regarding the Backfire ceiling and upgrading. ALCMs would be limited to the same as under the February proposal. SLCMs would be limited to 600 kilometers for submarines; and there would be something to be negotiated for surface-ship SLCMs that could have a range as great as 2500 kilometers.

The difference between the proposals is that there would be unconstrained submarine SLCMs, higher ceilings, unconstrained Backfire, and the advent of unconstrained submarine SLCMs.

Dr. Lehman: In the reductions agreement, cruise missiles on submarines go free?

Mr. Hyland: No. They would be banned above 600 kilometers and free up to 2500 kilometers on surface-ships.

Secretary Kissinger: That won't be saleable. What will be saleable is having the platforms counted as MIRVs. Running totally free will not be saleable.

General Brown: Cruise missiles on submarines are no great leverage on the Soviets.

Secretary Rumsfeld: It seems to me that one side of the coin is that if it is fuzzy -- and it is -- doesn't that mean that the difference is not greater or as fuzzy? The answer is yes. There is another way to look at it. We are looking at US technology where we have a lead -- costs, adequacy, utility. Therefore because we have a lead -- and this represents explosive potential -- capping is great leverage. We can look at the cup as half full or half empty. We must be very careful; we have a great lead and we may be giving up what we lead in.

President Ford: We must be realistic in two areas. Senator Humphrey has been calling for a ban on all development and testing of cruise missiles. If he prevails, this takes away our lead.

Secretary Rumsfeld: Not really. Some would like to abolish the whole Department of Defense, but we must fight it.

Secretary Kissinger: None of the limitations give up much in the way of technology -- either January or February.

Secretary Rumsfeld: I am addressing the idea of concern. On one side we have no full doctrine but on the other side is technology.

Secretary Kissinger: You would just be giving a little range, that's all.

General Brown: The only way we can tell the range of cruise missiles is from what we see in testing.

President Ford: As I read the opposition to Defense, if I were in uniform I would be scared. We might well have fewer dollars in some areas. I assume what they (the opponents) say they mean.

Secretary Rumsfeld: But no one around here assumes they will come into power.

President Ford: Yes, but if we look at the overall picture, we must put that into the formula.

General Brown: We are calling this matter exactly the way we see it -- no matter who comes into office -- it's not a matter of outcome of the election.

President Ford: But we cannot be oblivious to this. Plus there is this fuzziness, since, as Jim Wade mentioned, there is no doctrine for cruise missiles.

General Brown: Like Jim Wade says, it is the potential of these weapons that holds the attraction. We must protect the potential in the interest of the country.

Secretary Rumsfeld: There is an analogy, albeit an imperfect analogy. There are those who contend that miniaturization and the accuracy it can produce is a revolution that is as dramatic as that of atomic weapons. If you transfer back to the days when we were thinking about developing atomic weapons, if we had limited the ability to develop atomic weapons, where would we be today? You take a guy like Admiral Noel Gaylor -- he makes the case that overhead and underwater detection systems would permit us to vector out our cruise missiles.

President Ford: To where?

Secretary Rumsfeld: Enemy ships or submarines.

Secretary Kissinger: I think it goes a little too far to talk about cruise missiles as being the same as nuclear weapons. Ballistic missiles are accurate also, but it is no great advantage if cruise missiles get there in five hours rather than 20 minutes. But I don't want to argue against cruise missiles. I would be against anything that limits cruise missiles in all modes. I am just talking about some range limits.

Secretary Rumsfeld: But what do we get in return for it?

Secretary Kissinger: Two to three years ago we had an elegant discussion on how we could not possibly live with a perceived inequality where the Soviets would have 2580 versus our 2150 baseline.

Between the two options we have the following:

-- The February proposal would give us each 2400 and let SLCMs on surface-ships and submarines go free.

-- The January proposal would give us 2200 or 2150, with a 600 kilometer limit on SLCMs on submarines.

We are considering only 12 aircraft carriers now. We could have 50 platforms with cruise missiles additionally.

Secretary Rumsfeld: We have a desire to disperse our standoff capability.

Secretary Kissinger: In our desire to modify our forces, we must ask if it is worth it. There is not that huge a difference between the January and February proposals. In fact there is only a marginal difference.

President Ford: Assume it is 1985. In the interim period, we have had the opportunity to proceed with research and development on surface-ship SLCMs. But in the interim we have limited the range. But at the end of the agreement we can do what we want with the range. We have no ship-building program -- the earliest we could get ships is 1982 to 85. We could be testing. We could be developing the concept in the hardware so that we can have a breakthrough at the end of the agreement.

General Brown: I agree. We will have no new ships for SLCMs. But we could initially equip our fleet with SLCMs through modification of existing ships, for example by pulling off ASROC launchers.

President Ford: Do you see a need for surface SLCMs greater than 2500 kilometers?

General Brown: Not in the near term.

President Ford: Therefore you have no real program for these.

General Brown: It is all a concept.

Secretary Rumsfeld: We can use existing ships.

President Ford: That's not what Admiral Holloway said earlier.

Secretary Rumsfeld: Clements and Holloway went back after that earlier meeting to look into this -- as you will recall I was not at that meeting. I do not want to say that cruise missiles can't be touched; they already have been touched.

We have had the same four basic proposals since last year. We have the February proposal on the table. We should look at the Backfire -- we have the working group and the CIA looking at this.

President Ford: How soon will we have a report on the Backfire?

Director Bush: September, but we don't expect community agreement.

Secretary Rumsfeld: How big a difference is there between the CIA and the Air Force on the Backfire.

Director Bush: There is a strong opinion on the part of General Keegan, the Air Force Director of Intelligence.

Mr. Hyland: There is a study by FTD (the Air Force Foreign Technology Division).

Secretary Rumsfeld: And we have information on the SS-X-20.

President Ford: Do we have any more information on the TU-160 Soviet bomber?

Director Bush: Nothing more.

Secretary Rumsfeld: Do we have a timetable on the SS-X-20?

Director Bush: We have nothing on Backfire flights to the Azores, and can't confirm the newspaper reports to this effect.

Brent Scowcroft: If we want a SALT Agreement we ought to look at this in terms of its negotiability. The Soviets have given no indication of pursuing the February proposal. Maybe they are just stalling. But we might end up with no SALT if we do not work on something else.

Secretary Rumsfeld: All of us want SALT and we should go back to them. But the question is to go back to them with what.

Brent Scowcroft: The Soviets to date say that they are not interested in the February proposal. If this is true, then the difference is between no SALT or approaching them with something negotiable.

President Ford: The Soviets feel that the February proposal is unacceptable. If we don't change, we must face the prospect of having no SALT agreement. Therefore we must either decide to modify our proposal or abandon SALT.

Secretary Kissinger: They are working around us in the intellectual community saying we should give up the B-1 and the TRIDENT.

Brent Scowcroft: And they say they would give up the TYPHOON and TU-160.

President Ford: Thank you all.

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