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(Vladivostok, U.S.S.R.)

THE WHITE HOUSE
PRESS CONFERENCE
OF
HENRY A. KISSINGER,
SECRETARY OF STATE
AND
ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT
FOR NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS

4:18 P.M. (U.S.S.R. Time)

MR. NESSEN: Let me have one second before the Secretary talks to you.

Let me just talk to you for one minute, please. Now, you have in your hands the Joint Statement. There is going to be one other longer document which is the Joint Communique. The Joint Statement is the important document and it is the one that Secretary Kissinger will talk to you from. You will get the Joint Communique very shortly, as soon as we can finish running it off and stapling it and passing it out.

Both of these statements are for 7:00 p.m., local time, release. Dr. Kissinger's remarks are also for 7:00 p.m. local time release.

Now, if you want to take just a moment to look through it and then Dr. Kissinger will talk to you.

All right. Are we clear now on what is happening? Both pieces of paper plus the Secretary's remarks are for release at 7:00 tonight local time.

Q Filing?

MR. NESSEN: We have a lot of events yet to go. I will tell you about that later.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: If you are all through with reading the Joint Statement, let me deal with that. There is also a communique which we will distribute and if it should not be finished by the time when I get through with the Joint Statement, I will talk from it.

The Joint Statement, in our judgment, marks the breakthrough with the SALT negotiations that we have sought to achieve in recent years and produces a very strong possibility of agreement, to be signed in 1975.

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(OVER)

Perhaps the best way to talk about it would be to go back to the history of the negotiations, starting with the summit in July and the conclusion of the discussions since then, in relation to some specific issues before us.

In all of the discussions on SALT, there is the problem of aggregate numbers and then there is the problem of the numbers of weapons with certain special characteristics such as MIRVs. And finally, there is the problem of duration of the agreement.

In July, we were talking about an extension of the interim agreement for a period of two to three years and we attempted to compensate for the inequality of numbers in the interim agreement by negotiating a differential in our favor of missiles with multiple warheads.

This negotiation was making some progress, but it was very difficult to establish a relationship between aggregate numbers. It would be an advantage on aggregate numbers on one side and an advantage in multiple warheads on the other, all the more so as we were talking about a time period between 1974 and at the end of 1979 during which various new programs of both sides were going into production at the precise moment that the agreement would have lapsed. That is to say, the United States was developing the Trident and the B-1, both of which will be deployed in the period after 1979 and the Soviet MIRV development would really not reach its full evolution until the period 1978 to 1979.

In other words, while we were negotiating the 5-year agreement we became extremely conscious of the fact that it would lapse at the moment that both sides would have the greatest concern about the weapons programs of the other. And this was the origin of the 10-year proposal and the negotiation for a 10-year agreement that emerged out of the July summit.

No preparatory work of any significance could be undertaken in July on the summit, so that when President Ford came into office, the preparations for a 10-year agreement started practically from scratch.

Now, in a period of 10 years, the problem of numbers has a different significance than in the shorter period because over that period of time, one would have to account, really, for two deployments of a cycle that is usually a 5-year effort. And also, inequalities that might be bearable for either side in a 5-year period would become much more difficult if they were trying over a 10-year period.

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Finally, since we considered that any agreement that we signed with respect to numbers should be the prelude to further negotiations about reduction, it was very important the debates for reduction for both sides represent some equivalence that permitted a reasonable calculation.

I won't repeat on this occasion all the internal deliberations through which we went, the various options that were considered. There were five in number but various combinations of quantitative and qualitative restraints seem possible for the United States.

Finally, prior to my visit to the Soviet Union in October, President Ford decided on a proposal which did not reflect any of the options precisely, but represented an amalgamation of several of the approaches. This we submitted to the Soviet leaders about a week before my visit to the Soviet Union in October and it led to a Soviet counter-proposal which was in the general framework of our proposal, and which I have indicated to you marked a substantial step forward on the road to an agreement.

It was discussed in great detail on the occasion of my visit in October. The Soviet counter-proposal was studied by the President and his advisors and it caused us to submit another refinement, or an answer to the Soviet counter-proposal about a week before we came here. And then, most of the discussions last night, all of the discussions last night, and about two and a half hours this morning, were devoted to the issue of SALT.

President Ford and the General Secretary, in the course of these discussions, agreed that a number of the issues that had been standing in the way of progress should be resolved and that guidelines should be issued to the negotiators in Geneva, who we expect to reconvene in early January.

They agreed that obviously, as the Joint Statement says, the new agreement will cover a period of 10 years, that for the first two years of that period, the provisions of the interim agreement will remain in force, as was foreseen in the interim agreement; that after the lapse of the interim agreement, both sides could have equal numbers of strategic vehicles. And President Ford and Secretary General Brezhnev agreed substantially on the definition of strategic delivery vehicles.

During the 10-year period of this agreement, they would also have equal numbers of weapons with multiple, independent reentry vehicles and that number is substantially less than the total number of strategic vehicles.

There is no compensation for forward-based systems and no other compensations. In other words, we are talking about equal numbers on both sides for both MIRVs and for strategic delivery vehicles and these numbers have been agreed to and will be discussed with Congressional leaders after the President returns.

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The negotiations will have to go into the details of verifications of what restraints will be necessary, how one can define and verify missiles which are independently targeted. But we believe that with good will on both sides, it should be possible to conclude a 10-year agreement by the time that the General Secretary visits the United States at the summit and at any rate, we will make a major effort in that direction.

As I said, the negotiations could be difficult and will have many technical complexities but we believe that the target is achievable. If it is achieved, it will mean that a cap has been put on the arms race for a period of 10 years, that this cap is substantially below the capabilities of either side, that the element of insecurity, inherent in an arms race in which both sides are attempting to anticipate not only the actual programs but the capabilities of the other side will be substantially reduced with levels achieved over a 10-year period by agreement.

The negotiations for reductions can take place in a better atmosphere and, therefore, we hope that we will be able to look back to this occasion here as the period or as the turning point that led to putting a cap on the arms race and was the first step to a reduction of arms.

Now, I will be glad to take your questions.

Barry, and then Peter.

Q Mr. Secretary, excuse me, but are bombers under "a"?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Yes.

Q Bombers are included. When you say no compensation, you mean what we have in Europe counts against ourselves?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: No.

Q Excuse me?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: What I mean is forward bases which are not included in these totals.

Q They don't count in this?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Strategic bombers are included.

Q Yes.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Forward base systems are not included.

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Q My question follows on that. What are the advantages for the Russians in agreeing on the number of MIRVs being equal, that they would not raise questions about compensating for our forward base system.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Well, I think that we should ask the General Secretary for an explanation of why he -- I can explain to you our point of view on these matters, but I believe that both sides face this problem.

The arms race has an impetus from at least three sources: One, political tension; second, the strategic plans of each side; and third, the intent of each side to anticipate what the other side might do.

The most volatile of those in a period of exploding technology is the last one.

There is an element that is driving the arms race of insuring one's self against the potentialities of the other side that accelerates it in each passing year. I would suppose that the General Secretary has come to the same conclusion that we have, that whatever level you put for a ceiling it is enough to destroy humanity several times over, so that the actual level of the ceiling is not as decisive as the fact that a ceiling has been put on it and that the element of your self-fulfilling prophecy that is inherent in the arms race is substantially reduced.

I would assume that it was considerations such as these that induced the General Secretary to do this.

Q My question derives from the fact that no bargainer would put himself at a disadvantage and I am just wondering what, from our standpoint, would be the net advantage of maintaining our forward bases without the Soviet complaining that there is some imbalance or some inequality or inequation in the overall purpose.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Well, as you know, the Soviet Union had maintained that forward base systems should be included in the totals and this was one of the big obstacles to an agreement previously. The progress that has been made in recent months is that the Soviet Union gradually gave up asking for compensation for the forward base systems partly because most of the forward base systems, or I would say all of them, are not suitable for a significant attack on the Soviet Union.

At any rate, this is an element that has disappeared from the negotiation in recent months.

Q Secretary Kissinger, have you reached agreement on the number of MIRV vehicles or the number of MIRV warheads?

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SECRETARY KISSINGER: The number of MIRVed vehicles. The number of warheads could differ and of course, there are some differentials in the throw weight of individual missiles at any given period, though there is nothing in the agreement that prevents the United States, if it wishes to, from closing the throw weight gap.

We are not going to do it just to do it.

Q Dr. Kissinger, when was the discussion of SALT matters concluded and was that time used to discuss any other matter?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: The discussion of SALT matters was concluded around 12:30 and all the time between 12:30 and the time I came over here was devoted to other matters. The discussions were practically uninterrupted and I will get into these other matters after we are finished with SALT.

Q I have a question on the delivery vehicles.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Yes.

Q You speak of equality which I take to mean some level that is roughly an equality of total U.S. delivery vehicles in a triad mix and the same on the other side.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: That is right.

Q Would this, therefore, involve a larger number of total U.S. vehicles than existed under SALT 1 or by taking in the bombers are you still maintaining roughly the same number of land bases?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: By agreement, we are not giving up the number until the President has had enough opportunity to brief but roughly speaking, the total number is composed of a combination of missiles, of land-based missiles, submarine missiles, bombers and certain other categories of weapons that would have the characteristics of strategic weapons, the total number that accurately is equal and each side, with some constraints, but not very major ones, has essentially the freedom to mix -- that is to say the composite force -- in whatever way it wants. There are some constraints.

Q Is there any further constraint on the total throw weight that one side or another side could have? Under SALT 1, as I remember, there was a limit on the number of heavy missiles.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: The constraints of SALT 1 with respect to the number of heavy missiles are carried over into this agreement.

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Q Up to 1985?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Up to 1985. Throughout the whole period of the agreement. You said there will be a substantial reduction. Is this approximately --

SECRETARY KISSINGER: No, I am saying it will be the objective of the United States now that we have achieved a cap on the arms race. We have achieved a cap on the arms race if we can solve the technical problems of implementing the agreement that was made here. But I believe with good will, that should be possible.

We have always assumed that once we agreed on numbers, we could solve all the other problems, that from the basis of the cap that has been put on the arms race, so that both sides now have a similar starting point it will be the United States objective to bring about a substantial reduction of strategic forces, but there has not yet been an agreement to any reduction, obviously.

Q Dr. Kissinger, is there any provision in here concerning other types of modernization -- improvements, for example, of MIRVs? Was there any limitation on MIRVs discussed?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: No, there is no such limitation, but this is something that can still be raised in the discussions, but there is no such limitation.

Q Mr. Secretary, what does this initial statement have to do with the Trident and B-1 program, if anything?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Each side has the right to compose -- what it means is that the Trident and the B-1 program had to be kept within the total number of the ceiling that will be established by the agreement, but except for the limitations on heavy missiles, the rest of the composition of the force is up to each side.

Q Are these limits higher than the existing forces of both sides and will both have weapons to reach the --

SECRETARY KISSINGER: No. By the United States, this is somewhat more complex to calculate, depending on what weapons you count. For the Soviet Union, it is clearly below the limits and for both sides, it is substantially below their capability.

Q Will either side reduce its arms totals? I was not quite certain of your answer?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: I would say yes. But I think you will know about that better when the numbers become more --

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Q Dr. Kissinger, would you identify for us what the main hang-up was in the five earlier options and what mix the President decided upon that was the key to advancing an acceptable proposal?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: The big hang-up earlier was the combination of time periods and perhaps the complexity of the proposals; that is to say, when you are trying to calculate what advantage in the number of warheads compensates for a certain advantage in the number of launches, you get into an area of very great complexity and when you are dealing with a short, or relatively short time period you face the difficulty that each side throughout this time period will be preparing for what happens during the break-out period.

So, those were the big hang-ups through July. What I believe contributed to this agreement was, first, that with a 10-year program we were able to put to the Soviet Union a scheme that was less volatile than what we had discussed earlier for the reasons of the break-out problem.

Secondly, I believe that one of the problems that was raised yesterday -- namely, that they were dealing with a new President -- may have influenced Soviet decisions because it created a longer political stability.

Thirdly, the discussions, I think it can be safe to say, moved from fairly complex proposals to substantially more simple ones, and this permitted both sides finally to come to an agreement.

Q Mr. Secretary, if the goal at the end of the road is the signing of a Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty, in terms of percentages how far down that road does this joint statement put us?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Whenever I have given percentages and made predictions, I have got into enormous difficulties. I would say I would stick by my statement earlier. I would say that we are over the worst part of the negotiation if both sides continue to show the same determination to reach an agreement that they did earlier.

The issues that are before us now are essentially technical issues; that is to say, they are issues of verifications, issues of collateral restraints, issues of how you identify certain developments, but those are issues on which substantial studies were made before we made our original proposals. And therefore, had we not believed that they were soluable, we would not have made the proposals, so we think that it is going to be a very difficult negotiation which could fail. But I think we are well down the road.

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Q Sir, a couple of clarifiers, if I may, that I am not clear on.

Do I understand that there will be a reduction in the number of U.S. MIRVs? And secondly, is there some limit on throw weight? Is that what you are saying or did I hear you wrong?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: No. There is no restraint on throw weight except the restraint that is produced by the continuation of the ban of the limitation on heavy missiles and there is a restraint on the number of vehicles that can be MIRVed.

What was the first part of the question?

Q Are we past that point where we have to cut back?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: No, we are not past that point, but we could easily go past that point if we wanted to.

Q I realize that, but we are not physically past that point.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: No, but don't forget the Soviets have not even begun to MIRV their missiles yet. We are well down the road towards that goal.

Q I realize we have a larger plan at the moment. My question is whether we have to start to subtract.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: We do not have to start subtracting.

Q One other clarification question. This aggregate number is yet to be agreed upon?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: No, that number is agreed upon.

Q It has been agreed upon?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: The numbers in both A and B have been agreed upon.

Q Mr. Secretary, would you please --

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SECRETARY KISSINGER: And the President will discuss them with the congressional leaders, but both leaders thought that they did not want to include them in this statement.

Q Well, they would then be included in a treaty?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Yes.

Q Ratified?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: In other words, the agreement will not fail because of the numbers. The numbers have been set and the definition of what is counted in each number has already been set.

Q Mr. Secretary, what you are saying in effect is that you have already fixed the ceiling but you are not prepared yet to disclose what that ceiling is?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: That is right.

Q And that will be disclosed at what point?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Oh, I would expect during the week and certainly no later than by the time the instructions are drafted for the delegation.

Q Mr. Kissinger, does this not mean -- in other words, will not our MIRV reduction be considerably greater than theirs if we have many more and will not their reduction in nuclear missiles be greater than ours because they are allowed to have more in 1972?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Well, when you are talking about a 10 year program, I would say within a 10 year program in the absence of an agreement both of these questions are highly theoretical because over a 10 year period both we and they could easily go over the total number of permitted vehicles and easily go over the total number of MIRV vehicles.

In starting from present programs I think it is correct to say that this strain on the Soviet total numbers is going to be greater and the strain on our MIRV numbers is going to be greater but in practice it comes out about the same because there is no question that if we both kept going the numbers of MIRVed vehicles would soon reach a point where even the most exalted military planner would find it difficult to find a target for the many warheads that are going to be developed.

Q Mr. Secretary, do you believe that this will be acceptable to the congressional leaders, particularly those --

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SECRETARY KISSINGER: I think this will certainly be acceptable to the Congressional leaders that have been --

Q Including Senator Jackson?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Well, I am sure you can find a more convincing spokesman for Senator Jackson than me but it would meet many of the criticisms that he has made in the past. It meets the point that has been made by critics of the interim agreement in my view only about the inequality in numbers because as I pointed out on many occasions the inequality in numbers was not created by the interim agreement that existed when the interim agreement was signed and it simply froze the situation that existed on the day the interim agreement was signed for a five year period. But at any rate what was acceptable for a five year period was not acceptable for a 15 year period, 5 plus 10, and therefore that principle of equality has to be maintained here.

Q Mr. Secretary, one last question, please. Would you address yourself to the question of good faith on this? This is very important and will be a very important agreement to the security of the people of both nations. What will you say as a statement of faith and a guarantee?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: When the security of both countries is involved and the national survival of both countries is involved you cannot make an agreement which depends primarily on the good faith of either side, and what has to be done in the negotiations that are now starting is to assure adequate verification of the provisions of the agreement. We think that this is no problem or no significant problem with respect to the total numbers of strategic vehicles. It may be a problem with respect to determining what is a MIRVed vehicle. Nevertheless, we believe that that, too, is soluble though with greater difficulty than determining the total numbers.

Good faith is involved in not pressing against the legal limits of the agreement in a way that creates again an element of the security that one has attempted to remove by fixing the ceiling or to put it another way by putting a cap on the arms race. But I think that the agreement will be very viable and that the element of good faith is not the principle ingredient in releasing the agreement though it was an important element in producing the agreement.

MR. NESSEN: Mr. Secretary, you are going to miss your tour if you don't leave now.

Also, we are now passing out the joint communique.

The Secretary wants to make this tour.

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SECRETARY KISSINGER: Let me take another question.

Q I want to get this right. Do I understand while you are putting a cap on the future numbers this agreed upon total is higher than what each side has now in aggregate, the combination?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: I did not say this, no.

Q That is the inference I get.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: I said specifically it is lower than what the Soviet has and in our case it depends on how you compose the total number.

Q Mr. Secretary, was there any discussion on what each side will do for resuming the work of the Geneva Conference on the Middle East as soon as possible?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: No.

Q Does that mean the end of your own efforts, for example, in the area?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: No. This is a phrase that was also in the summit communiqué and it has always been assumed that my efforts are compatible with the prospective efforts of the Geneva Conference.

Q To what extent did the talks get into the Middle East situation, Mr. Secretary?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: There was a rather lengthy discussion of the Middle East. Let me go through the topics that were discussed in addition.

There was a discussion of the Middle East, of the European Security Conference and forces in Europe and a number of issues connected with bilateral relations. These were the key other topics that were discussed.

Q Can you tell us about your discussions on the Middle East?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Well, I think there is an agreement by both sides that the situation has elements of danger, that an effort should be made to defuse it. We are not opposed to the Geneva Conference and we have always agreed that it should be reconvened at an appropriate time and we agree to stay in further touch with each other as to measures that can be taken to alleviate the situation.

Q What role does the Soviet Union think the PLO should play in the negotiations? How should they be recognized and how should they --

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SECRETARY KISSINGER: Well, I think the Soviet view has been publicly stated. We did not go into the modalities of how they would execute it since we made our position clear at the United Nations last week.

Q Specifically the trade reform bill in the United Nations.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: That was touched upon.

Q Where did you leave the ESC?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: The European Security Conference. We had a detailed discussion of all the issues before the European Security Conference in which, as you all know, Foreign Minister Gromyko is one of the world's leading experts and we sought for means to move the positions of East and West closer together and we hope that progress can accelerate.

Q Mr. Secretary, can you compare the progress made on nuclear weapons with the progress made by the Soviets with the Middle East?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Not even remotely.

Q You did not make any progress on the Middle East?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: I don't think that progress on the Middle East is for us to make and it was a different order of discussion. The progress on SALT was a major step forward to the solution of a very **difficult problem**. The discussions on the Middle East I think may have contributed, and we hope will contribute, to a framework of restraint in enabling the two countries that have such a vital interest in the area to stay in touch with each other but it cannot be compared.

Q How much time do you estimate, Mr. Secretary, you spent discussing the Middle East?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: How much time was spent? I didn't keep track of it. An hour, but that is a rough order of --

Q Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

Q Was there a question of future sale of any U. S. commodities with the Soviet Union?

Q Question.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: I didn't hear the question either but it dealt with economics so I don't want to answer it.

END (AT 5:01 P.M. U.S.S.R. Time)