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NSC/Soubers to Smith 09/06/2002

By *BJR* Date *02/14/07*

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

~~TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

November 18, 1972

National Security Decision Memorandum 197

TO: The Secretary of State
 The Secretary of Defense
 The Director, Arms Control and
 Disarmament Agency

SUBJECT: Instructions for the Strategic Arms Limitation
 Talks, Geneva, November 21, 1972

The President has approved the following instructions for the U.S. Delegation to the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks beginning on November 21 in Geneva.

1. The overall U.S. objective is a permanent agreement limiting strategic offensive arms. While the Interim Agreement is an acceptable point of departure, a permanent agreement should be based on essential equivalence in central strategic systems. We should not reopen issues related to the ABM Treaty.

2. In the initial talks the U.S. will not offer specific proposals. These talks should be preparatory in nature and lay the groundwork for a more systematic negotiation next year. To this end, the Delegation's objective should be to obtain Soviet views in order to aid the development of future U.S. positions. Therefore, the Delegation should avoid prejudging such positions. The U.S. Delegation should propose developing a work program for the next round of negotiations. However, in accepting subjects for further discussion, it should be made clear that we are not thereby committed to the inclusion of any given measures in the final agreement.

3. For the U.S. Delegation, the first order of business should be the establishment of the Standing Consultative Commission, as called for in the ABM Treaty and the Interim Agreement. As soon as feasible, negotiations could also begin on establishing agreed dismantling and replacement procedures.

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4. The U. S. presentation at the initial talks should focus on (a) establishing priority for the negotiation of limitations on central strategic weapons -- ICBMs, SLBMs, and heavy bombers; (b) establishing a high degree of equivalency in this overall category, and (c) stressing our strong concerns over the unique capabilities that the USSR derives from its greater ICBM throw weight and the potentially destabilizing effect of the Soviet advantage in Modern Large Ballistic Missiles. The Delegation should seek to have these issues reflected in any work program.

5. The Delegation should stress that a fundamental principle of a permanent agreement should be overall numerical equality in central systems, and within this framework, our goal is equality in ICBM numbers and overall ICBM throw weight.

6. The U. S. Delegation should not offer for discussion any specific numerical limits for an overall aggregate of central systems. The Delegation should indicate that its preferred approach is that equal aggregates should be established through reductions. The work program should encompass the questions of reductions.

7. The U.S. should raise freedom to mix among central systems as a characteristic of a permanent agreement. Limits on freedom to mix would be dependent on other features of the limits on central systems.

8. If the Soviets should raise the question of mobile ICBMs, the Delegation should accept it for discussion as part of the discussion of central systems.

9. The U. S. Delegation should not raise forward based aircraft or missiles, or our submarine bases abroad. If the Soviet Delegation addresses these questions the U. S. can accept them for further discussion; it should be made clear that we do not thereby acknowledge the legitimacy of these systems as "strategic" or as an element in the composition of an overall aggregate. In this connection, if tactical aircraft are a subject for further discussion, the U. S. should indicate that we will raise non-central Soviet systems, as well as systems capable of attacking our bases and forces.

10. The U. S. should not raise non-transfer of strategic offensive weapons, but if necessary could accept the issue as an item in a work program.

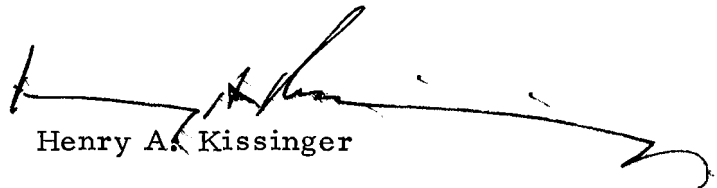
On both issues -- forward based systems and non-transfer -- the U. S. should make it clear that they will be addressed by the U. S. side only after an initial negotiation of issues related to limitation on central systems. No further comment should be made on these subjects.

11. The U. S. should hold open the question of qualitative limitations as a general category for subsequent discussion without dealing in the specifics of limitations.

12. The U. S. Delegation should not foreclose raising the air defense issue in later phases of the negotiation. At an appropriate time, the Soviet Delegation should be made aware that we will discuss it later.

13. The formality or informality with which the discussions are conducted should be determined by the Chairman of the Delegation.

14. It is not envisaged that this round should cover more than about four weeks. At an appropriate time during the initial talks, the Delegation should seek instructions on the date of resumption.



Henry A. Kissinger

cc: Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
Director of Central Intelligence
Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission