

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12958, as amended, Sect 3.5

NSC/Soubers to Smith 09/06/2002

By 6/2/07 Date 66/21/07

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

~~TOP SECRET~~

October 15, 1973

National Security Decision Memorandum 237

TO: Secretary of State
Secretary of Defense
Director, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency
U. S. Commissioner, SALT Standing
Consultative Commission

SUBJECT: Instructions for U. S. Commissioner, SALT Standing
Consultative Commission, Geneva, September 24, 1973

The U. S. Commissioner should continue his efforts toward development of an agreed set of procedures governing notification, dismantling and replacement as called for in Article III and Agreed Interpretation (K) of the Interim Agreement and Articles VIII and XIII of the ABM Treaty.

The U. S. Commissioner is authorized to accept the Joint Draft Texts for strategic offensive arms and for ABM systems and their components as the basis for negotiating the mutually agreed procedures called for by the ABM Treaty and the Interim Agreement.

The U. S. Government considers the achievement of these mutually agreed procedures to be important, but not at the expense of U. S. security interests. The U. S. Commissioner should proceed accordingly consistent with the instructions contained herein.

The basic U. S. position remains the procedures approved by the President in NSDM 217, modifications thereto developed and reflected in the approved Joint Draft Text in the first SCC session, and specific modifications enumerated below:

1. The U. S. Commissioner should continue to seek notification that SLBM launchers under construction are intended as replacements for older ICBM launchers. Notification should be given prior to the start of sea trials of replacement SLBM launchers. If after several weeks it is clear the Soviets will not accept any form of prior notification, the U. S. Commissioner should seek instructions.

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2. The U. S. Commissioner should strive for agreement limiting the number of SSBNs in a construction status based on the current U. S. proposal. If after several weeks it is clear that the Soviets refuse to accept specific numerical limitations, the U. S. Commissioner may drop our proposal for numerical limits and accept the general guideline in the Joint Draft Text that the number of replacement submarines shall not exceed a number consistent with a normal construction schedule. However, this must be based on the clear understanding that a normal construction schedule is not significantly in excess of past or present demonstrated SLBM construction rates.

3. The U. S. Commissioner should maintain the basic U. S. position on dismantling older ICBMs. The U. S. objective is to insure that deactivated ICBM sites are not utilized as launch, storage or support sites for ballistic missiles. This objective should be met through a combination of detailed dismantling procedures and a general ban on the use of deactivated facilities for storage, support or launch of ballistic missiles. The U. S. Commissioner is authorized to develop specific language with the Soviet component on an ad referendum basis pending final approval in Washington.

4. The U. S. Commissioner should maintain the current U.S. position on the dismantling of older SLBM launchers with the following modifications:

- He is authorized to drop the proposed procedure of sinking in international waters if the Soviets refuse to accept prior notification thereof.
- He is authorized to explore the Soviet proposal for cutting off the launch tubes above the pressure hull and their covering superstructure for H class submarines. In doing so, he should reiterate the U. S. view that dismantling procedures should be considered separately for each system and type of launcher based upon the pertinent features of each.

5. Guidance on other issues raised in the first SCC session or in the subsequent internal U. S. government review is set forth below.

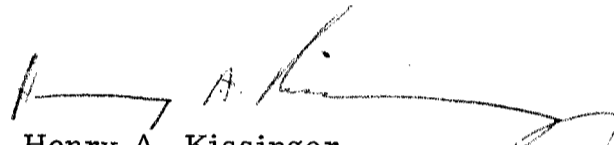
- The U. S. should seek to modify the Joint Draft Text to include the proposed U. S. definition of modern SLBMs.

- The U.S. Commissioner should not raise the subject of publication of these procedures. However, if raised by the Soviet side he should respond that the U. S. has no plans to make these procedures public at this time.
- The U. S. Commissioner should retain the current wording regarding voluntary information in the approved Joint Draft Text.

6. The U. S. SCC Commissioner is authorized to propose language on an ad referendum basis to resolve the remaining issues identified in the interagency study on the SCC pending final approval in Washington.

7. The U.S. Commissioner is authorized to inform the Soviet Commissioner that, subject to satisfactory resolution of the issues covered above, including the proposed U. S. changes and additions, the unbracketed portions of the Joint Draft Text would be acceptable to the U. S.

8. The sensitivity of the SCC negotiations and the avoidance of leaks must be maintained. All substantive statements on SCC activities are to be cleared through the White House.



Henry A. Kissinger

cc: Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
Director, Central Intelligence
Chairman, U. S. SALT Delegation