D. The "Third Party" Danger

Most of the U.S. efforts in this area have concentrated on the interaction of Soviet and U.S. forces and systems, and possible risks of nuclear war through accident, miscalculation or misunderstanding from this interaction. However, we have also paid attention to the risks that might arise from the use of nuclear weapons by a third country or subnational group.

Six nations are known to have detonated nuclear explosive devices, and a number of additional countries currently have, or could achieve, the technological and industrial capacity to develop and produce nuclear weapons. A decision to "go nuclear" could occur quickly, once a nation with the necessary technology came to regard nuclear weapons as a desirable means to respond to perceived threats, to acquire international prestige, to salvage national honor, or to compensate for loss of confidence in outside security assurances or nuclear guarantees. Compounding the problem is the possibility that a terrorist group might acquire a nuclear weapon by fabricating a crude device or by stealing one from an existing stockpile.

E. Approach of this Study

The United States and the USSR have a common interest in averting unintended or accidental nuclear war between them, and in preventing use of nuclear weapons by third nations or by terrorists that could trigger such a war. However, we must recognize that many fundamental differences between the United States and the Soviet Union complicate any effort to further that common interest through jointly agreed measures. The United States seeks to establish a stable balance of military forces and a world order based, not on the use of force, but on respect for the territorial integrity of nations. It perceives arms control measures, including CBMs, as means to help achieve these ends. [redacted] While the Soviet Union pro- [redacted] tesses to seek the same objectives, it encour- ages and takes advantage of political and military instabilities throughout the world, and is likely to exploit any ambiguities in a negotiated agreement. [redacted] JS 3.3(b)(6)

The political and military interests of the United States and the Soviet Union conflict with respect to many specific nations and situations. The USSR also has a deep interest in weakening the bonds between the United States and its many friends and allies throughout the world.

Moreover, the United States and the Soviet Union differ in fundamental geographic and societal characteristics. The United States is preeminently an open society, whose government must freely share vital information about national security

with the public--and thereby automatically with foreign governments. The leaders of the closed Soviet society, in contrast, maintain a heavy veil of security over their political and military activities. In addition, the Soviet Union is a large land power, contiguous to many of its allies and client states, and a short distance from many of our allies. The United States, on the other hand, is geographically distant from most of its friends and must, therefore, devote special effort to ensuring access to them.

All of those differences mean that the United States must approach prudently any effort to devise joint U.S.-Soviet measures to reduce the risk of war or to contain and control the threat of use of nuclear weapons by third countries or terrorists. In this regard, it is important not to lose sight of the fact that most of the CBMs which the USSR has proposed in the past have sought to create or to solidify Soviet geopolitical or strategic advantages. Some Soviet CBM proposals have tried to restrict our ability to come to the aid of our allies or to defend other U.S. interests. Others have aimed at ensuring Soviet conventional and/or nuclear superiority. Such proposals are, of course, unacceptable, whether they are presented on their own or as the price for Soviet agreement to measures we advocate.

We must also carefully examine any suggestions for U.S. CBM proposals to ensure that they would not inadvertently offer the Soviet Union some important unilateral benefit at our expense. We also must be alert to the possibility that any agreement could unduly restrict our ability to come to the aid of our allies, or directly harm their interests in another way. Indeed, our efforts must not only protect the interests of our allies, but must also take into account our relations with all those nations which conduct themselves in accordance with the UN Charter and other international agreements.

Finally, we must avert the possibility that the USSR could use CBMs for deception or unilateral intelligence purposes. The closed nature of Soviet society permits the Soviet government to use disinformation and deception as foreign policy tools in a way that is not acceptable—let alone feasible—for any democratic government. The fundamental purpose of CBMs could be undermined if the Soviet Union was permitted to turn them into propaganda or deception opportunities. Exceptional care must be taken to ensure that the very procedures agreed upon to reduce the risk of accidental nuclear war would not themselves become the means for the deception which would allow a premeditated surprise attack. Moreover, the United States needs to weigh carefully the possibility that measures designed to increase understanding and reduce the risk of misinterpretation could provide the Soviets with valuable, unique insights into U.S. military programs and intelligence operations, without necessarily providing the United States with comparable information or advantages.

A crisis control center located in a neutral country would be far removed from the national capitals where crisis decisions would have to be made. This separation would present several serious drawbacks. It is most likely that a center would be completely bypassed in national crisis decisionmaking. If not, a center would create a cumbersome extra layer in the national and international decision processes, retarding action just when speed was most imperative. Moreover, flexibility in deciding when to communicate, which would be an important feature of a JMCL, would be difficult to achieve in an institutionalized U.S.-Soviet crisis control center. The institution would provide a clear and legitimate channel for automatic consideration of any crisis--including those in which Soviet participation would serve to heighten, rather than reduce, tensions.

A multilateral crisis control center would suffer from even more problems. The more members in a center, the less likely that they would all share a common interest in preventing the outbreak or escalation of conflict. Even if that were not the case, the decisionmaking process in a multinational center would easily become bogged down, and inhibit timely, concerted actions to avert a serious crisis. Indeed, there would be a general risk that the facility would evolve from a confidential tool for crisis management into a forum for waging propaganda warfare over sensitive crises.

Finally, the expansion of the number of recipients of shared information would increase the danger that a member government might use the facility to spread disinformation or misuse gathered information. With unrestricted membership, it would be impossible by definition to exchange intelligence data. Any shared information would immediately be in the public domain.

OSD 3.3(b)(6)

5. Information Sharing Facility

A U.S.-Soviet institution for sharing information on nuclear activities by third countries or terrorists would present many of the problems associated with a crisis control center and add new ones. [redacted] Since such a body would concentrate on information exchange, the risks would increase that the Soviets could transform it into a new source of sensitive intelligence data or attempt to exploit it for disinformation purposes. [redacted] Those risks would be compounded if an effort was made to endow the institution with a general data bank or if it was made a multilateral rather than bilateral forum.

Although an information-sharing institution therefore does not seem feasible, we are considering a multilateral agreement providing for consultations during particular nuclear crises.

The information needed by the West for effective verification of arms control agreements generally requires disclosure of what the Soviet Union considers to be state secrets--even though it may involve information normally made public in the West. Consequently, except for such collateral measures as dismantlement and destruction procedures, the Soviet Union typically prefers caveated or ambiguous wording which makes it difficult to challenge its compliance with verification rules.

The Soviet Union's callous disregard of the 1972 Biological Weapons Convention by producing deadly toxins and of the 1925 Geneva Protocol by using and encouraging the use of deadly toxins against combatants and innocent civilians in Southeast Asia provides the most compelling explanation of why, in the future, the U.S. must insist that arms control agreements with the USSR contain effective verification provisions.

We have examined several technical and procedural measures which could enhance verification capabilities and thereby contribute to mutual confidence between the United States and the Soviet Union. These include the use of combined consultative commissions, international verification bodies, data exchanges and other measures beyond National Technical Means of verification. All, however, require further analysis in the context of specific treaty requirements.

B. Measures to Lengthen Warning Time of Potential Attack

Many of the initiatives discussed earlier in this report--the President's proposals for ballistic missile launch notifications, the Joint Military Communications Link, the high rate data link between each side's capital and its embassy in the other country, the agreement to consult during crises involving terrorist nuclear activity--would heighten U.S. and Soviet awareness of-and thereby ability to divert--any near-term danger of a nuclear accident or attack. We have also examined more technical measures which might enhance U.S. and Soviet warning capabilities, whether the threat comes from the other party, from a third country, or from a terrorist or subnational group. After careful study, however, we have concluded that none of the possible bilateral U.S.-Soviet measures available for increasing warning time would have enough utility to warrant its continued consideration.

OSD 3.3(b)(5)(8)

[redacted]

C. Measures to reduce vulnerability of command, control and communications (C^3) on both sides

Finally, we have examined possible bilateral U.S.-Soviet and unilateral approaches to reduce the vulnerability of our command, control and communications (C^3) systems—the systems necessary to communicate with and direct strategic forces.

[redacted]

The strategic C^3 system is vital to insure that strategic forces can respond to attack, and is therefore an essential element of deterrence. The system also guarantees that the ultimate control over nuclear weapons resides at the highest national decision-making level. The C^3 system provides the essential intermediary between our nuclear attack warning system and the decision-makers who would determine a response to a nuclear attack. Thus, it must be capable of performing its functions both during and after attacks.

Shortly after President Reagan took office in 1981, he directed that a thorough review be conducted of the stategic C^3 system and its ability to function under and survive attack. When the President announced his Strategic Modernization Program, he gave the highest priority to correcting strategic deficiencies. Major initiatives for achieving these C^3 corrections are now under way. President Reagan's decision was made in response to ten years of neglect of U.S. C^3 capability and survivability, as well as a sustained Soviet C^3 improvement program. That Soviet effort has not only strengthened the Soviet strategic C^3 system but also increased its ability to target and destroy U.S. strategic forces and associated C^3.

The modernizations program for strategic C^3 calls for balanced improvements in essential capabilities, including upgrading of the survivability and endurance of the alert warning and attack assessment sensors, increasing mobility and endurance of command decision-making functions, extensively improving communications, and assuring means for recovery and reconstitution of U.S. strategic forces following a major nuclear attack.