

STRATEGY FOR TRANSPARENCY AND IRREVERSIBILITY

In a memorandum to Dr. Davis dated September 19, 1995, I suggested five reasons for our failure to make more progress on transparency and irreversibility. In this paper, I will discuss each of these five issue areas from the standpoint of what could be done to overcome the obstacles they present.

1. Lack of incentives for the Russians. There is no direct financial payoff for MINATOM or MOD in transparency and irreversibility. To correct this, we would have to consciously link our other programs of assistance to progress in STI. Since these other programs are essentially useful on their own terms, linkage would be a weak reed for us to lean on. The most we should do is point out that the political climate in Washington would be more favorable for continuing assistance to Russia if real progress were being made in STI. Other financial incentives are conceivable. For example, there has been some discussion of Nunn-Lugar funding for warhead dismantlement in Russia. I believe this is a promising area and probably would be the most directly irrelevant of all the incentives we could assemble. I recommend that we pursue this with the Defense Department with a view to using an offer of Nunn-Lugar assistance as a prime incentive for breaking the logjam which we are now facing with regard to the Agreement for Cooperation. It also has been suggested that we should buy more HEU from the Russians. I don't know how plausible this is but if we decide to do that, this would be a clear case where we should link our willingness to do this to Russia's complete cooperation in STI.

We have tried to take the high road with the Russians by pointing out the importance of STI in showing U.S. and Russian leadership in moving the world away from the legacy of the Cold War. Dr. Davis' letters to Mamedov and Mikhailov, dated July 29, 1995, took that view. Probably, the Russians are not much moved by appeals of that sort given their current circumstances but we should be able to use presumed Russian interest in a successful Summit meeting in Moscow in the spring to persuade them that headway in STI would be a useful accompaniment to the

Summit meeting. We have started to do this and it is mentioned in the draft letter to Chernomyrdin from Vice President Gore. We should do more along these lines.

An incentive that we have not used or even analyzed is whether a link to ongoing negotiations in nuclear warhead dismantlement as a follow-on to the START II negotiations would be interesting enough to the Russians that they would be more receptive to STI. Analysis on that point would be useful but there has been a delay in proceeding with PDD-37 presumably because of the delay in START II ratification. With ratification imminent in the United States, we should proceed to this analysis even though the State Duma in Moscow is not likely to ratify START II in the near future.

2. Political risks involved. It is apparent that lower-level officials in Russia and even ministers themselves are laboring under the burden of fear of being criticized for allowing Americans to get too near important state secrets and state facilities. The response to this fear has been excessive delay in making decisions and a tendency to bump decisions up to the highest levels.

We have to recognize that key decisions in this area are not going to be made much short of Chernomyrdin and Yeltsin. Therefore, there must be more of a high-level dialogue on this subject than there has been to date. The Summit meetings and the GCC meetings have been useful in getting top-level Russian leaders to support STI but between these meetings there is little or no progress. To correct this, either the President or the Vice President should take on this project as a matter of serious interest to top U.S. leadership and make it clear to the Russians that we expect real progress in this area.

To persuade our top leadership that they should invest their time in this probably is going to mean that we should broaden the scope of transparency and irreversibility so that it indeed embraces the kinds of negotiations foreseen in PDD-37. In short, unless President Clinton and Vice President Gore are themselves persuaded that transparency and irreversibility is sufficiently important and politically interesting enough

for them to take on as a matter of personal interest with top Russian leadership, we will not be able to overcome the fears of lower-level officials in Russia that they are jeopardizing their careers by participating in these negotiations.

I have recommended in the past that the U.S. be more open with regard to some of our own facilities and some of our own activities so as to encourage the Russians to believe that they are not making sacrifices that we are unwilling to make. An about-to-be-published Harvard report argues along similar lines, drawing on Tom Cochran's speeches. Our record on this is quite good, I think, but we have been unwilling to open up PANTEX to Russian visits. We have also been quite cautious about discussions regarding monitoring HEU warheads. I think we might be a little more relaxed about some of these matters in an effort to give whatever friends we have in Russia something to use as to why they should be more receptive to openness on their side.

3. Dysfunctional Russian governmental apparatus. We cannot treat the Russian government as a normal government and deal with it in the way we would deal with the German or even Chinese governments. The image I have is of people at the top that are pulling the levers not connected to anything down below. In the meantime, the ambitious ministers like Mikhailov are trying to defend or expand their empires. These days, a hard line on American issues is a way to protect these empires. What this means, I think, is we have to work all the angles available to us in Russia. We cannot avoid Mikhailov even though most people in Washington recommend doing just that. We have to work with him as best we can and I believe there should be more high-level State contact with him than there has been. Admittedly, it is discouraging when Mikhailov failed to respond to Dr. Davis' letter to him of July 29. We now have an opportunity to renew that contact, however, since both Dr. Davis and Minister Mikhailov are heavily involved in preparing for the April Summit meeting. I recommend that Dr. Davis focus on persuading Mikhailov to accept STI as one of the important subjects for him to push forward.

At the same time, we need to work with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs because they nominally have the lead in some aspects of these negotiations. And, as mentioned above, we need to deal with Yeltsin and Chernomyrdin. Obviously, the MOD is also very much involved. The mechanics of addressing MOD on this issue are best known to Secretary Perry and Ash Carter. I would suggest that at the next meeting that takes place between Dr. Davis and high-level Defense officials this subject be raised.

4. An overloaded bilateral agenda. STI has naturally had to take second place to other more urgent issues like CFE and BMD. It has also taken second place to nuclear security issues in our relations with Russia. If we intend to move STI to one of the primary topics of negotiations with the Russians, this way of assigning priorities has to change. STI is important because it will deal with some key aspects of nuclear security. It is important because it opens the next phase of security issues we face with the Russians and in that sense is looking forward rather than backward. It is important because properly packaged it could be a highly effective political platform in demonstrating that the Clinton Administration is on top of big security issues of the future. If these statements are accepted as facts, as I believe them to be, then we must give higher priority to STI than it has been given in the past.

5. Complexity of the subject matter. One of the reasons that STI attracts little high-level attention is that the underlying purposes of these negotiations have never been properly understood by our top leadership. When it looks as though we are bogged down with matters of detail, the natural reaction is to shrug it off and go on to other more pressing matters. We need to do a better job in explaining what STI is all about. I think this can best be done in the context of following up on PDD-37. Even without that move, however, we need more public outreach on the subject. Dr. Davis has spoken on this in public fora and I have done the same, including a piece published in the State Department Dispatch. There has been little or no interest on the part of other senior officials, including in the Department of State, in explaining this particular facet of our foreign policy to

the public. I am afraid that very much the same happens in Russia. But being more clear in our public explanations in this country should find a resonance in Russia.