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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

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October 31, 1991

MEMORANDUM FOR AMBASSADOR REGINALD BARTHOLOMEW
MR. STEPHEN HADLEY
MR. VICTOR ALESSI
MR. DOUGLAS MACEACHIN
LTG JOHN SHALIKASHVILI
AMBASSADOR READ HANMER

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Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHS
Date: MAR 15 2016

FROM: JOHN GORDON

SUBJECT: Tactical Systems Paper

At a recent meeting of some of our principals, they decided to ask our steering group to expand our work on the President's Nuclear Initiative to consider more fundamental questions of U.S. policy toward Soviet nuclear weapons in the context of the rapidly changing center-republic relationship. In particular, what nuclear arrangements do we want to see evolve, how should we try to influence the center and the republics towards that end, and what contingency plans should we have in place if that fails?

Our priorities should be to look first at the issues surrounding tactical nuclear weapons and then at strategic weapons. This later subject should include an assessment of Gorbachev's proposal to go to further significant cuts in follow-on negotiations.

Attached is a first draft of an outline of a paper that focuses on the tactical systems. I would like to discuss this tasking at our November 1 meeting and get the work underway.

Attachment
Tactical Systems Paper

DOE

Department of Energy Document Review

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2nd Review Date: 9/16/13
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October 31, 1991

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Nuclear Weapons and the Republics

1. Goals and objectives

- Peaceful devolution of power from the former Soviet Union to republics without the threat or use of conventional or nuclear force.

- All Soviet nuclear weapons under a single -- inter-republic -- collective control authority, with responsibility over deployment, modernization, dismantling, use, etc. of all Soviet nuclear weapons. Republics would be represented in the collective and have a say in all decisions. No other independent nuclear authority/states.

- Avoid the appearance and reality of favoring Russia over the other republics.

- Facilitate the prompt and safe elimination of the tactical nuclear weapons cited in Gorbachev's October 5 announcement.

- Rapidly enhance the security of nuclear weapons against takeover by breakaway republics, breakaway units, terrorists, or profiteers.

- Secure disposition for the enriched uranium and plutonium derived from eliminated Soviet weapons.

2. Impediments and problems

- The former Soviet Union is collapsing, and the potential for disorder within republics and hostilities between republics is high.

- While the dominant view in republics other than Russia is to remove or eliminate the nuclear weapons on their territory, there are other views and that outcome is by no means certain.

- Some republics (e.g. the Ukraine) oppose the removal of nuclear weapons to Russia, but have no facilities for eliminating weapons.

- The safe transportation and dismantling of nuclear weapons and the disposition of the special nuclear material are technically demanding tasks.

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- o Neither we nor the Soviets have substantial new resources to devote to storage or dismantling of Soviet nuclear weapons.

- o Political developments are moving ahead at a very rapid rate; the dismantling of Soviet nuclear weapons will take a considerable time, and even interim steps will take months or years. We need a framework for managing this problem and and give us the time necessary to eliminate most Soviet nuclear weapons and get the remainder under secure ~~central~~ control.

3. Strawman US ~~declaratory~~ policy

- o All Soviet nuclear weapons should be under the secure control of a central collective authority.

- o The US can understand that republics will want a say in decisions (on deployment, modernization, use, etc.) made by the collective authority, but that is for the republics and the center to decide.

- o This is without prejudice to the political relationship between republics, and between republics and a new union. That, too, is for the republics themselves to decide.

- o All issues resulting from the devolution of the Soviet Union should be settled peacefully without threat or use of force.

- o START and CFE should be ratified and implemented promptly.

4. Strawman measures for Soviet tactical nuclear weapons

- o Consolidate Soviet tactical nuclear weapons in secure locations separate ~~from operational units.~~ (Do we want this number to be big or ~~small?~~) No need for this. I thought we could be general.

- o Rapidly demilitarize all Soviet weapons (e.g. remove tritium and store separately, remove fuze and store separately, etc.) so that capture of a storage facility does not result in capture of usable weapons.

- o Inventory (and tag?) all Soviet weapons.

- o Establish a presence at the storage facilities of other republics? the US? other NATO? the UN?.

- o Assistance in the safe, rapid, transparent transportation and dismantling of nuclear weapons in Russia, and safe and transparent disposition of the special material.

5. Strawman measures for strategic forces

6. Negotiating partner

- Soviets designate team including representatives of the center and the republics to discuss the above steps.
- Work with the same team to resolve any problems for CFE and START caused by teh devolution of the former Soviet Union.
- Not til after Dec. 1

7. Questions

- What contingency plans should we have if one or more republics (other than Russia) move toward becoming independent nuclear states? How should we strengthen our overall non-proliferation efforts if additional nuclear states emerge among Soviet republics?
- Although the problem of control of tactical nuclear weapons is exclusively a Soviet problem, are we prepared to take any of the steps in the above tactical strawman for our own weapons scheduled for dismantling?
- What carrots are we prepared to offer republics which decide to cooperate with this approach? What sticks if they do not?

8. Annex

- Data on the numbers, types, and locations of Soviet nuclear weapons, storage facilities, and dismantling facilities.
- Collect the statements of each of the republics and of the center on their policies toward nuclear weapons.

JCS work for 7 only

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POSITION PAPER

4 November 1991

SUBJECT: *Tactical Systems Paper* (U)

1. (U) *PURPOSE:* Provide input to NSC Tactical Systems paper on "strawman measures for strategic forces."

2. (S) *KEY POINTS: The following are recommended for paragraph 7:*

- Our key priority continues to be the ratification of START, which provides a fundamental structure for limiting and reducing the strategic nuclear forces controlled by the USSR or the republics. A ratified START Treaty will help bind the republics into a viable infrastructure for managing strategic nuclear forces while other nuclear initiatives proceed. We should encourage Congress to avoid actions which could delay ratification or jeopardize the bilateral nuclear infrastructure that START formalized. We should anticipate that Senate ratification will be made contingent on subsequent ratification by both the Supreme Soviet and the individual republics which have strategic nuclear weapons on their soil.

- We should request that the central government and the republics take further action to respond to the U.S. President's Nuclear Initiative. That is, weapons that are to be reduced by START should be removed from alert and demilitarized. Road-mobile ICBMs should be recalled to their restricted areas. New strategic nuclear systems development should be limited to one single reentry vehicle ICBM system.

- We should encourage the near term subordination of all strategic nuclear forces in the Soviet Union to a collective system of control, with or without a central government. Our chief goal should be to avoid creating friction between the republics over the ownership of strategic nuclear systems. While we would prefer that as many nuclear forces as possible be eliminated, consolidation of remaining systems within Russia deserves US support. We should be prepared to discuss interim steps as well as transparency and confidence building measures with the non-Russian republics to minimize concern over potential Russian nuclear dominance.

- In the near term, we should offer immediate, no cost technical assistance to the republics for the security, deactivation, transportation, and elimination of nuclear forces. Emphasizing deactivation of delivery systems over destruction will produce tangible results soonest because removal of the delivery capability may be more easily and reliably achieved than total weapon elimination. We should also pursue obtaining and providing temporary nuclear weapons storage containers or liquid fuel tankage for use by the Soviets in the deactivation process.

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- We should begin follow-on talks with the central government and the republics on strategic force structure changes. Near term discussions should focus on determining the Soviet post-START force structure and the remaining modernization programs for strategic forces. Our long term objective will remain the negotiation of further reductions leading to a stable strategic nuclear force posture. The initial goal should be agreement on a proposal which includes both deMIRVing of ICBMs and a reduction to 5000 START accountable warheads on both sides. A goal and strategy for follow-on cuts can be determined after the initial goal is reached.

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JCS work for 1 → 8

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Center or Disarm

- Avoid the appearance and reality of favoring Russia over the other republics.

- Facilitate the prompt and safe elimination of the tactical nuclear weapons cited in Gorbachev's October 5 announcement.

- Rapidly enhance the security of nuclear weapons against takeover by breakaway republics, breakaway units, terrorists, or profiteers.

- Secure disposition for the enriched uranium and plutonium derived from eliminated Soviet weapons.

- Avoid all but most necessary movement of nuclear weapons (i.e. to elimination facilities) to minimize danger of accident, abduction, loss, etc.

2. Impediments and problems

- The former Soviet Union is collapsing, and the potential for disorder within republics and hostilities between republics is high.

- While the dominant view in republics other than Russia is to remove or eliminate the nuclear weapons on their territory, there are other views and that outcome is by no means certain.

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- The safe transportation and dismantling of nuclear weapons and the disposition of the special nuclear material are technically demanding tasks.

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- Establish a presence at the storage facilities of other republics? the US? other NATO? the UN?.

- Assistance in the safe, rapid, transparent transportation and dismantling of nuclear weapons in Russia, and safe and transparent disposition of the special material.

5. Strawman measures for strategic forces

o Press to have Soviet eliminations under START begin first with systems outside Russia.
o Discourage transfer of ICBMs to Russia, to a lesser extent discourage transfer of HBs to Russia
o Encourage Central Republics to negotiate "status of forces" agreements providing for stat systems remaining on alert

6. Negotiating partner

o Soviets designate team including representatives of the center and the republics to discuss the above steps.

o Work with the same team to resolve any problems for CFE and START caused by teh devolution of the former Soviet Union.

7. Questions

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o What carrots are we prepared to offer republics which decide to cooperate with this approach? What sticks if they do not?

o How do we avoid showing bias toward Russia or Center

8. Annex

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