

STRATEGIC ARMS REDUCTION TALKS (START)

ISSUE BRIEF NUMBER IB82114

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DATE ORIGINATED 11/02/82
DATE UPDATED 12/08/82

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ISSUE DEFINITION

On June 29, 1982, the United States and the Soviet Union began new negotiations on controlling strategic nuclear weapons, termed Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START). The Reagan Administration's basic approach is to seek deep cuts in strategic nuclear arsenals.

START raises a number of issues:

- Will the Administration's proposal lead to meaningful reductions?
- How does the START proposal relate to the Administration defense programs and strategic doctrine?
- Are there alternatives which better serve U.S. interests?
- What are known or likely Soviet reactions?

BACKGROUND AND POLICY ANALYSIS

START: Description and Evolution

The Reagan Administration's START proposal envisions two steps towards arms reductions (though not necessarily two separate agreements). In the first phase, the Soviet Union and the United States would reduce strategic missile warheads to about 5,000 on no more than 850 intercontinental land-based and sea-based missiles (ICBMs and SLBMs). No more than half of these warheads could be on ICBMs. In the second phase, the aggregate missile throw weight (i.e., the useful payload potential of a missile booster) would be equalized at a level no greater than the aggregate throw weight of the present U.S. ICBM force (approximately 4 million pounds).

According to the Administration, these proposals would require the following reductions:

To reach the limit of 5,000 deployed strategic missile warheads, the Soviet Union would have to eliminate 2,400 warheads, and the United States, 2,452.

To reach the limit of 850 strategic missiles, the Soviets would have to eliminate 1,498 missiles, and the United States, 746.

To achieve the 2,500-warhead sub-ceiling on ICBMs, the Soviets would have to reduce their currently deployed ICBM warheads (5,500) by 3,000. In contrast, the United States would not be required to reduce the number of

currently deployed ICBM warheads (2,152) because they total less than 2,500. However, the United States would have to reduce the current number of warheads deployed in SLBMs (5,300) by 2,452 not to exceed the 5,000 overall warhead ceiling. There would not be a similar reduction in the number of Soviet warheads deployed on SLBMs, because their total is currently below 2,500.

If the missile throw weight limit were set at or near the current U.S. level of approximately 4 million pounds, the Soviet Union would have to sacrifice approximately 7 million pounds of its current throw weight total of approximately 11 million. The following chart summarizes these reductions:

<u>START Limit</u>	<u>Eliminations Required</u>	
	<u>of U.S.</u>	<u>of U.S.S.R.</u>
5,000 Warheads	2,452	2,400
850 Missiles	746	1,498
2,500 ICBM Warheads	0	3,000
2,500 SLBM Warheads	2,452	0
4 million pound throw weight	0	7 million

The Evolution of START

START's beginnings are to be found in the demise of SALT II (Strategic Arms Limitations Talks), and the positions candidate Reagan and many of his supporters took during that process. Reagan deemed SALT II to be "fatally flawed." With like-minded critics, he argued that the agreement would merely codify the arms race and not actually reduce the threat posed by strategic nuclear weapons; that SALT II could not be confidently verified; that it would concede the U.S.S.R. a major and threatening advantage in ICBMs; and that it would leave the U.S.S.R. in a position to further increase its strategic advantage when the agreement expired in 1985. Reagan believed that the United States had agreed to this "unequal bargain" because it was negotiating from a position of strategic inferiority. From this he concluded that for the immediate future the United States must look to a stronger defense program for its security and only subordinately to strategic arms control. He did, however, leave the door open to negotiations once the United States had taken steps to remedy its strategic deficiencies.

After assuming office, President Reagan confirmed the rejection of SALT II and began a substantial arms build-up (though he has ultimately agreed that the United States will "not undercut" the terms of SALT II as long as the Soviets exercise similar restraint.) But he also indicated a readiness to

negotiate a new treaty that would provide for deep reductions. He initiated a comprehensive review of arms control policy "to learn the lessons of the past in order to achieve more lasting progress in the future."

Subsequently, Europe and the United States both saw the growth of popular movements strongly critical of Administration policy with regard to nuclear weapons. In Europe, this took the form of an "anti-nuclear" movement opposed to NATO plans to deploy new intermediate range nuclear systems on European soil. In the United States, there were demands for a complete "freeze" on all nuclear weapons deployments. These new political forces appear to have played a significant part in inducing the Administration to move more quickly beyond study and into actual negotiations with the Soviet Union.

The first initiative came in November 1981, when the Administration proposed the "zero option" formula for limiting intermediate range nuclear forces (INF) in Europe, by which the U.S. proposes to scrap plans for new missiles (Pershing II and Ground Launch Cruise Missiles) in Europe if the Soviets take out all existing missiles in the U.S.S.R. targetted on Western Europe. [See CRS Issue Brief 81128: NATO Theater Nuclear Forces: Modernization and Arms Control.] Since then, the Administration has also taken new initiatives in the Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction Talks (MBFR) that have been going on between NATO and the Warsaw Pact since 1973. During the winter and spring of 1982, the overall strategic arms control program took shape, and it was made public by the President in an address at Eureka College on May 9.

The START Proposal

The notion that shapes the Administration's START proposals is that the most important weapons to control and reduce are those that are potential first strike weapons, i.e., that can quickly destroy hardened targets like missile silos. Of special concern is the Soviet Union's force of large ICBMs, which many believe have acquired the capability to destroy the U.S. ICBM force in a first strike, giving rise to the "window of vulnerability" problem. There is also the more general consideration that the less vulnerable the missiles of both sides, the smaller the temptation of either power to launch them preemptively in a crisis. Consequently, in the START proposals, missiles are included while bombers are not, since the former can strike quickly while the latter take several hours to reach their targets and are essentially retaliatory. Also, since SLBMs are currently less lethal against hard targets than ICBMs, the special sub-ceilings are only included for ICBMs. The Administration justifies formulating a proposal that requires larger Soviet reductions by noting that the Soviet Union has a larger number of destabilizing (i.e., first strike) weapons.

The two-phase approach to START has lost some of its currency as the negotiations have proceeded. It reportedly derived from inter-departmental bargaining within the Administration over the terms of its initial negotiating proposal. The Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Department of Defense seem to have favored a new approach to arms control in which the "unit of account" would be throw weight rather than launchers as in SALT. Former Secretary of State Haig reportedly argued successfully for an opening proposal more consistent with past practice on grounds that this would be more acceptable to Soviet negotiators. The U.S. proposal thus concentrates first on trying to lower the number of missiles and warheads to equal levels

while reserving the more difficult question of equalizing throw weight for later. The two phases are conceived as parts of "a single negotiation", however, and though the door is left open to a first phase agreement, the Administration reportedly envisions only one treaty.

More details of the Administration's START position have been reported in the press as negotiations have proceeded, and there is evidence of flexibility, especially as regards weapons such as cruise missiles and bombers which are not included in the original U.S. proposals. Reportedly, the Administration would be willing to limit long-range bombers to current levels (but just what types of aircraft these levels might include is not clear, though apparently it will insist that Soviet Backfire bombers, which have a limited capacity to strike the United States but were not counted under SALT, be included in these ceilings). The Administration has also shown willingness to discuss cruise missiles (though ground-launched cruise missiles currently fall under the rubric of the INF talks mentioned above.) Nevertheless, the U.S. START position remains incomplete. When the Administration announced its START proposal in May 1982, it acknowledged it had yet to work out positions on important matters such as verification and missile reloads. Critical choices still lie ahead for both countries, as each unveils and refines its position and responds to counter-initiatives. This could slow the pace of negotiations. On the other hand, the two chief negotiators, Edward Rowny and V.P. Karpov, know each other and the issues well, and many thorny technical matters -- definitions, counting rules, and the like -- were resolved during the SALT negotiations, and will be carried over to START.

The issue of "linkage" merits mention. The Reagan Administration has decided to proceed with strategic arms negotiations despite Soviet behavior in Afghanistan, Poland and elsewhere. This is a significant departure from the position that arms control should be used as carrot and stick to moderate inappropriate Soviet behavior. Whether the Administration perseveres in this approach is probably contingent upon the extent to which the U.S.S.R. engages in future activities that provoke strong U.S. public condemnation.

Analysis of U.S. Proposals

Summarized below are the major criticisms of the Administration's START proposals and the Administration's public responses. Criticisms fall into three categories:

- Some see the proposals as unrealistic, either because they are lacking in significant components or because they are founded on incorrect assumptions; these critics argue that such problems raise serious questions about the sincerity of the Administration's approach.
- For different reasons, others see the proposals as failing to offer a real prospect for meaningful arms control; these critics argue that START's framers have not thoroughly understood certain intractable problems that became evident in the SALT process.

-- Yet others see an agreement based on START as undesirable; these critics argue that a START agreement might destabilize rather than stabilize the strategic nuclear situation; some also argue that START is inconsistent with general Reagan Administration defense policy which seeks a rapid build-up in the U.S. nuclear capability.

(1) Administration Negotiating Sincerity

A major criticism is that the proposals are one-sided. START puts the greater burden of reductions on the Soviet Union, and permits the U.S. to go ahead with all of its currently planned counterforce-capable strategic systems, requiring reductions only in older systems that would have to be retired in several years anyway. It permits the deployment of large quantities of ALCMs (air-launched cruise missiles) and SLCMs (submarine-launched cruise missiles) that for the moment have no Soviet counterpart.

Critics doubt Moscow's willingness to seriously consider neutralizing its own strength in ICBMs and begin competing from a position of weakness in other areas, and to "trade the present for the future" by cutting into its existing forces in an effort to stop a U.S. build-up that is only now getting underway. These critics wonder whether in drawing up its proposals the Administration gave sufficient attention to the divergent interests of the two parties. The Soviet Union and the United States have different security requirements, make different assumptions about how they are to be met, and consequently, for quite legitimate reasons, have developed asymmetric force structures. Practical expectations for negotiation requires that these differences be taken into account in some fashion. In this regard, equality of sacrifice may approach equality of result as a factor in arms control.

The Administration's response is two-fold. First, it points out that its proposals focus on those weapons generally considered to be the most destabilizing; at the same time, it has expressed willingness to discuss the other systems in the strategic arsenal if Moscow is also willing to do so. Second, it sees Moscow as perfectly capable of recognizing and defending its own interests in the negotiations and argues that, therefore, U.S. negotiators ought to elucidate positions that advance U.S. interests. An ancilliary advantage is presumably that a one-sided opening bid will signal Soviet leaders that the current Administration is not so eager to gain agreement that it will sacrifice vital U.S. security interests.

A second criticism made of the START proposals is that they contain no provisions for verification. This is a special concern since START places new burdens on monitoring capabilities. By changing the unit of account from something that is relatively difficult to conceal (e.g., silos and other missile launchers) to something less visible (e.g., missiles themselves, deployed warheads, and missile throw weight), the monitoring and verification problem becomes much more complex. The Administration's response is that this is a matter still under internal discussion, and one which is relatively incidental this early in the negotiations. It has indicated, however, that it will insist upon some form of on-site verification to supplement national technical means (NTM).

A third criticism of the START proposals is that they are based on "incorrect assumptions" about the strategic balance. Debate continues over

Administration claims that the Soviet Union now holds important strategic advantages including a capability to eliminate the U.S. Minuteman force with a first-strike. Some experts suggest that this vulnerability is a theoretical one without practical significance. If this is the case, then large reductions in Soviet ICBMs may not be required and a major rationale for the Administration's START proposal is thus undermined. The Administration finds the evidence of U.S. strategic vulnerability to be persuasive with important implications for U.S. force structure and modernization plans.

These three criticisms are cited as evidence that the Administration's START proposals are nothing more than a ruse to mollify critics and side-track arms control negotiations while the United States rearms. These critics see the outlook for arms control based on current policy as further clouded by other factors. The Soviets may prefer to wait and see whether popular anti-nuclear sentiment succeeds in softening the U.S. position. Critics also fear that the U.S. strategic build-up will increase the appetite of Soviet military planners, whose demands are more likely to be honored as their favor is courted during the coming Soviet succession struggle.

The Administration's response is that START is a negotiable proposal with a good chance for producing a useful arms control agreement. It argues that flagrant Soviet intransigence would adversely affect Western and Third World public opinion, presumably a development Soviet leaders would prefer to avoid. The Administration does not see time as being on the Soviet side. It also posits a Soviet desire to preempt a major U.S. arms build-up which, given the exorbitant cost of new weapons, could be costly for both sides, but especially for the Soviet Union, already under serious economic strain. Unrest among Soviet nationalities and in Eastern Europe only adds to Soviet hopes for a period of calm in its superpower relations, in the Administration view. The Administration does not deny the priority it places on defense policy and the need for a defense build-up, but contends that useful arms control can proceed within this framework. It also argues that the school of thought exemplified by its critics, though well intentioned, has been tested over the past decade and in practical effect reduced the U.S. position from strategic strength to inferiority.

(2) Promise for Useful Arms Control

Other critics, while not necessarily questioning the intentions of the Administration, feel that START is not likely to lead to useful arms control because it does not reflect an understanding of the limitations of the SALT process. Arms control analysts point to several such limitations, of which the following are the most salient.

First, START like SALT fails to address significant "gray area" problems. It ignores an intimate relationship between theater and strategic forces that bears directly on Soviet calculations of the nuclear threat. This deficiency is generally acknowledged, and some Administration spokesmen have suggested the possibility of merging the START negotiations with the negotiations on Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces (INF) currently under way in Geneva.

Second, some argue that START like SALT adopts the wrong unit of account. Critics point out that to limit only deployed warheads preserves significant U.S. advantages in stockpiled warheads. The Administration's response is that the START categories are distinct improvements over SALT, and that

whatever the merits of adopting other units of account, START's two-phase approach offers the best chance of producing a balanced strategic arms control agreement.

Third, some argue that START like SALT is inadequately framed to deal with the threat posed by evolving weapons technology. As SALT II failed to contain MIRV technology, so START could fail with regard to cruise missiles and the improving counterforce capabilities of SLBMs. START supporters acknowledge the difficulty of constraining weapons technology, but add that a beginning has to be made somewhere and that the START proposal provides the means to channel dangerous developments in ways that will strengthen rather than undermine strategic stability.

(3) Implications for Stability

The third set of criticisms focuses on the extent to which an agreement based on the START proposals would promote stability in the strategic relationship. Stability has been assessed in different ways. [See article by Leon Sigal cited in the bibliography.] It can derive from each side's confidence in the survivability of its second strike capability (termed strategic stability). Stability also results when neither side has reason to expect an attempt at a preemptive strike (termed crisis stability). Another type is arms race stability, which exists when neither side is concerned that the other is trying to build weapons that threaten its second strike capability or crisis stability. Administration critics have argued that an agreement based on START could seriously erode some or all of these factors.

Some have pointed out that a START agreement would not halt the arms race. Under START, the United States would be able to modernize each leg of the strategic triad with MX, Trident submarines, Trident I and II, cruise missiles, and B-1 and Stealth bombers. Presumably, the Soviets would be allowed similar "non-destabilizing" deployments. The Administration response is that there is no quick fix to the nuclear dilemma and that a START agreement would help deescalate the arms race and promote crisis stability. It stresses that a START agreement would lessen the number of weapons deployed and required for nuclear security. It notes further that U.S. modernization programs go hand-in-hand with negotiations, being a convincing demonstration of U.S. will to maintain secure second strike forces with or without an arms control agreement.

Some argue that START focuses too much on equalizing numbers while neglecting the more important goals of balancing force asymmetries and preventing destabilizing surprises. The Administration response is that instability already exists resulting directly from unequal numbers of counterforce-capable ICBMs.

A related argument made against START is that reductions, while good in principle, increase the "breakout" danger. A relatively small number of hidden weapons could dramatically alter the strategic balance as the overall totals decline. The Administration's response is that this problem argues persuasively for strong verification measures but not against the desirability of reductions.

Another problem posed by the specific reductions formula called for in the START proposals is that it does not solve the ICBM vulnerability problem. Currently, the Soviets are able to target each U.S. land-based missile silo

with about four warheads; under the proposed formula that ratio would not diminish and could well increase to 6 to 1 or even 12 to 1, depending on the particular force mix each side chooses under the START ceilings. [For an analysis of this aspect of the START proposals, see CRS White Paper: President Reagan's START Proposal: Projected U.S./U.S.S.R. Ballistic Missiles Forces, by A.A. Tinajero, June 9, 1982.] The Administration acknowledges this defect, but argues that a survivable basing mode for ICBMs can be devised that alleviates the vulnerability problem.

In the debate over START, other measures have been considered, some of which might be adopted if there is not a very high degree of confidence in the survivability of a new ICBM basing mode. One is to put a higher portion of U.S. warheads on ICBMs than currently appears likely under START. But since this would mean fewer submarines at sea, the task of Soviet anti-submarine warfare may be eased, with the possible net effect of increased SLBM vulnerability, currently the most survivable leg of the U.S. strategic triad. Another option would be to deploy ABMs, though this would require changes to the ABM Treaty. Some critics argue that a dangerous new arms race might begin if the ABM limits in the current agreements were significantly loosened. Another more radical solution is to forego altogether land-based ICBMs and place all warheads in air-launched or submarine launched systems. Extensive arguments are made about the merits of each option, which are not covered here. [See CRS Report 81-222F, Assessing the Options for Preserving ICBM Survivability, by Jonathan Medalia, September 1981; and archived CRS Issue Brief 77046, U.S. Strategic Nuclear Force Options, by John Collins and Elizabeth Severns; last update 01/04/82.] The foregoing simply highlights the point that START does not solve the ICBM vulnerability problem and that the Administration has pursued other measures to solve that problem, some of which would pose new problems of their own.

The Administration acknowledges that to ensure total and mutual invulnerability is beyond the scope of current technology and arms control, and that the success of a START proposal would be in creating the next best thing, namely equality of vulnerability. [See U.S. and Soviet Views Far Apart at Opening of Arms Talks Today, in New York Times, June 29, 1982.] Its acknowledgement of this point and of the pertinence of a survivable basing mode to the ICBM vulnerability problem has brought it closer to the mainstream of arms control of the 1970s.

Some argue that any arms control agreement based on current forces would be destabilizing. They argue that arms control will limit the capabilities of U.S. forces and sacrifice important new programs as "bargaining chips" at a time when the U.S.S.R. enjoys clear strategic superiority and exhibits more interest in formalizing its supremacy than in promoting stability. Many of these critics are one-time Reagan supporters who feel that their trust in the Administration has been betrayed by its pursuit of an arms control agreement. They see START as inconsistent with earlier Administration policy that sought explicitly to relegate arms control policy to a status subordinate to defense policy (i.e., a remedial build-up). A related argument made by some is that the Soviet Union does not share the interest of the Western arms control community in promoting stability, as the Soviets goal is unchallengeable supremacy.

The Administration's response is that the START proposals are consistent with its defense policy. Any agreement embodying the START proposals would still permit the modernization of the U.S. arsenal. Such an agreement, the Administration argues, would facilitate the primary goal of Reagan strategic policy by permitting the U.S. to redress deficiencies in its capabilities,

thus enhancing survivability and therefore deterrence, while hindering the Soviet Union from enhancing those areas where it currently has an edge.

Soviet Response

The first official Soviet response to President Reagan's May 9 speech announcing START was made by Soviet President Brezhnev on May 18, and it set the critical yet cautious tone of subsequent Soviet statements. Brezhnev approved of U.S. willingness to resume negotiations but was critical of START's main points as "absolutely unilateral". He made oblique reference to the departure from SALT ("We should try to preserve everything that has been achieved.") and proposed adoption of a freeze on development and deployment of new types of strategic weapons to commence concurrently with the talks. Subsequently, Soviet spokesmen have portrayed the U.S. proposal as lopsided and as deliberately ignoring those systems in which the United States and its allies possess major strengths. They have argued that the proposal fails to meet the basic requirement that any agreement should observe the principle of equality.

In an unexpected move, the Soviet Union made a counterproposal before the mid-August recess, offering to reduce strategic forces to a common ceiling of 1,800 long-range missiles and bombers. This offer sets ceilings 20% below those provided for in SALT II, and is remarkably similar to the proposal made by the Carter Administration in early 1977. The net effect would be to reduce the Soviet missile and bomber force by approximately 28% and the U.S. arsenal by about 7%. The proposal would not greatly reduce the number of warheads, however, since missiles could still be MIRVed in large numbers. Reportedly, the proposal also calls for curbs on Typhoon and Trident class ballistic missile submarines, a ban or limits on cruise missiles, and an extension of "confidence-building measures". The freeze on development and deployment of new systems proposed by the Soviets to run concurrently with the talks is not explicitly linked to the counterproposal ceilings, and the Soviets reportedly acknowledge that some accommodation will have to be made on the modernization issue.

There are competing perceptions of the significance of the Soviet proposal and the nature of Soviet intentions. Some analysts have interpreted the Soviet failure to reject the U.S. proposal out of hand as a sign of Soviet willingness to negotiate seriously; others see the counterproposal as a public relations ploy aimed at currying favor with public opinion in the West and Third World. Some have termed the Soviet counter-proposal "surprisingly forthcoming" and are encouraged by a stated Soviet willingness to modify SALT II in the general direction envisioned by the Reagan Administration. Others see the Soviet proposals offering very little promise of overcoming the profoundly different assessments each side makes of the current strategic nuclear balance and what constitutes a fair agreement.

Other Approaches to Arms Control

In the interregnum following the demise of SALT II, a number of proposals were advanced for getting arms control negotiations back on track. Critics of current policy have pressed various of these suggestions as alternatives

to the Administration's START proposal. Some of the concepts might be seen as potential supplements to the Administration's approach, that is, as additional negotiating tracks.

A sampling of other approaches includes:

A Nuclear Weapons Freeze: There is substantial public sentiment for, and some congressional interest in, a freeze on strategic nuclear weapons. The essential point that distinguishes a freeze approach from SALT or START is that a freeze would cap growing numbers of nuclear weapons before proceeding to the more difficult task of restructuring or reducing strategic forces. [See CRS Issue Brief 82059: Nuclear Freeze: Arms Control Proposals, by Mark Lowenthal.]

Ratify SALT II: Calls continue for the ratification of SALT II. Advocates of this position argue that despite its faults, SALT II would enhance U.S. security, and has the added advantage that it has already been negotiated. They also note that the Administration concedes that there are no near-term conflicts between SALT II and its program of strategic rearmament. [See statement of Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger in Strategic Weapons Proposals: Hearings Before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Nov. 3, 4, and 9, 1981, p.5.] If SALT II were ratified, reductions and other Administration goals could then be effected through amendments to the basic agreement. However, parts of the SALT II Treaty have already expired and would require renegotiation.

Other Reduction Proposals: Some strategic force analysts have suggested a graduated approach to arms cuts in the form of annual percentage reductions. Rep. Albert Gore, D-Tenn., has applied this concept in an elaborate scheme for the phased elimination of all MIRVed ICBMs. [See Congressional Record Mar. 22, 1982, p. H994, and Aug. 10, 1982, p. H5605.] The Soviets have hinted interest in this proposal. Others would go further by eliminating ICBMs altogether.

Conclude "Peripheral" Negotiations: Proponents of this option argue that the stability of the central strategic balance could be enhanced through agreements related to other areas of arms competition. They would resume negotiations for a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, dropped when negotiations were close to complete; pursue ratification of treaties that the US has signed on Peaceful Nuclear Explosions and a Threshold Test Ban; open bilateral negotiations on a treaty eliminating chemical weapon stockpiles that have not been taken up by the Reagan Administration; and assess new areas of arms confrontation to consider the extent to which they might effectively be controlled (e.g., space-based weapon systems, especially antisatellite systems).

Confidence-building Measures: Many argue that another way to make the central strategic balance more manageable is to take steps to increase the transparency and predictability of each side to the other. This could reduce fears and perceptions of threats so that crises are less likely occur and are more manageable when they do. Advocates of this approach argue that confidence-building measures are a promising option since they can result from informal bilateral understandings and unilateral initiatives and are thus not burdened by the formal and comprehensive treaty negotiation process. In the spring of 1982, the Reagan Administration proposed to negotiate with the Soviets on notification of strategic missile test launches and expanded exchange of strategic force data. Brezhnev has expressed a willingness to expand other kinds of confidence-building measures, such as troop movement

notification. Public evidence, however, has not indicated follow-ups to either proposal.

ROLE OF CONGRESS

Formally, Congress becomes involved in international agreements only after they have been negotiated and signed by the Executive. There are two types of international agreements invoking different forms of congressional involvement: executive agreements and treaties. The Arms Control and Disarmament Act requires that any agreements (other than treaties) that limit US forces require the approval of both the Senate and House, by a simple majority. In the case of START, an executive agreement is considered an unlikely form of agreement, though it was used for the SALT I interim agreement and was considered but dropped by President Carter for SALT II. Treaties require the consent of just the Senate, by a vote of two-thirds.

[N.B.: strictly speaking, this process of congressional advice and consent does not constitute "ratification". A treaty is ratified when the signatories exchange instruments of ratification (generally a protocol and the treaty itself), which occurs after each party has given legitimacy to the commitment according to its own laws. In the case of the United States, Senate approval allows the ratification process to proceed.]

Practically, however, Congress often takes a hand in the process much earlier. It can bring its influence to bear through hearings on arms control and strategic arms policy, through the exercise of its constitutional prerogatives with regard to the appointment of arms control policy makers, and by granting or withholding funds for strategic arms programs which could weaken or bolster the President's bargaining position in negotiations. Conceivably, Congress might also pass into law initiatives that would push the Executive toward a particular U.S. policy on strategic issues. A case in point is the well-known "Jackson Amendment" of 1972, which "urges and requests" that any future treaty "not limit the United States to levels of intercontinental strategic forces inferior to the levels provided for the Soviet Union."

By these means, Congress is likely to be closely involved in the START process. Testimony was given to Congress by U.S. negotiators after the first round of negotiations, a form of consultation that will probably continue. The Administration is also likely to court congressional support as (and if) an agreement begins to look promising, for many contend that a major factor in SALT II's demise was the Carter Administration's failure to manage adequately the domestic politics of arms control, thus losing congressional support. The Administration has apparently decided, however, not to follow occasional past practice of according formal observer status to members of Congress interested in following the negotiations closely. It has, though, indicated that it would welcome congressional visits to Geneva where full briefings could be provided.

Arms control is a highly politicized issue, and if SALT II is any indication, START is likely to become a significant issue hotly debated in Congress and a major factor in congressional-executive relations.

HEARINGS

U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Foreign Relations.
Nuclear arms reduction proposals. Apr. 29-May 13,
1982. Hearings, 97th Congress, 2d session.
Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1982. 402 p.

REPORTS AND CONGRESSIONAL DOCUMENTS

U.S. Congress. House. Committee on Foreign Affairs.
Calling for a mutual and verifiable freeze on and
reductions in nuclear weapons and for approval of the
SALT II agreement; report, together with minority and
supplemental views, to accompany H.J.Res. 521. July
19, 1982. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1982.
21 p. (97th Congress, 2d session. House. Report
no. 97-640)

U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Foreign Relations.
Nuclear arms reductions; report, together with minority
and additional views, to accompany S.J.Res. 212. July
12, 1982. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1982.
82 p. (97th Congress, 2d session. Senate. Report
no. 97-493)

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

- 12/06/82 -- Soviet Defense Minister Ustinov denounced the U.S. Dense Pack deployment scheme for MX as a "gross violation" of existing arms control agreements, which pledge the parties "not to develop additional stationary launching installations for intercontinental missiles." He also warned that the Soviet Union was prepared to deploy a new ICBM of equivalent capability.
- 12/02/82 -- The strategic arms reduction talks recessed at Geneva.
- 11/26/82 -- The Soviet party newspaper Pravda charged that Dense Pack would violate SALT I and SALT II prohibitions on the construction of additional fixed ICBM launchers.
- 11/23/82 -- The Soviet news agency Tass denounced President Reagan's Dense Pack deployment decision as a "new dangerous step" that would raise the arms race to a "higher, more expensive and dangerous level."
- 11/22/82 -- The Administration announced that it had decided to deploy 100 MX missiles in the Closely Spaced or

"Dense Pack" basing scheme. In a speech announcing the decision, President Reagan argued that MX deployment would give the Soviet Union incentive to negotiate significant strategic arms reductions. The President also announced that he had proposed new "confidence-building measures" to the Soviet negotiators at Geneva. In a news conference, Defense Secretary Weinberger contended that the MX Dense Pack deployment was consistent with the terms of SALT II, which prohibits the construction of additional fixed launchers of ICBMs.

10/06/82 -- START negotiations resumed.

08/12/82 -- START negotiations recessed.

07/12/82 -- Senate Foreign Relations Committee reported out S.J.Res. 212, a nuclear arms reduction resolution which among other things stated: To provide a basis for progress during the START negotiations, the United States shall continue to refrain from actions which would undercut the SALT I and SALT II agreements, provided the Soviet Union shows equal restraint.

06/29/82 -- START talks between the United States and the Soviet Union began in Geneva. Both sides agreed to keep the contents of the talks confidential.

05/31/82 -- During a Memorial Day speech, President Reagan announced that the START talks would begin June 29. As regards U.S. policy on SALT compliance, the President said: As for existing strategic arms agreements, we will refrain from actions which undercut them so long as the Soviet Union shows equal restraint.

-- The United States and the Soviet Union issued a joint announcement on the starting date for the strategic arms control negotiations.

05/18/82 -- Soviet President Brezhnev responded to President Reagan's START proposal. He described Reagan's call for the resumption of talks as "a step in the right direction" but criticized the specifics of the proposal as "absolutely unilateral in nature". He proposed a U.S.-Soviet freeze on strategic weapons to take effect "as soon as the talks begin" and called for modernization of such weapons to be "limited to the utmost".

05/11/82 -- In testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Secretary of State Haig said "we consider SALT II to be dead. We have so informed the Soviet Union."

05/09/82 -- During a commencement address at Eureka College

in Illinois, President Reagan announced his plan for strategic arms control. The President proposed phased reductions aimed at "the most destabilizing systems, the ballistic missiles":

- "At the first phase, or the end of the first phase of START, I expect ballistic missile warheads, the most serious threat we face, to be reduced to equal levels, equal ceilings, at least a third below the current levels. To enhance stability, I would ask that no more than half of those warheads be land-based."
- "In a second phase, we'll seek to achieve an equal ceiling on other elements of our strategic nuclear forces including limits on the ballistic missile throwweight at less than current American levels."
- The President expressed the hope that the START negotiations would begin by the end of June.

01/24/82 -- It was confirmed that the Administration had decided not to set a starting date on strategic arms reduction talks to impress upon the Soviets that "we're not doing business as usual as long as repression is under way in Poland."

11/18/81 -- President Reagan announced his "zero option" position for upcoming Geneva talks on medium-range nuclear weapons in Europe. On strategic arms control, he said: "The United States proposed to open negotiations on strategic arms as soon as possible next year. I have instructed Secretary Haig to discuss the timing of such meetings with Soviet representatives.... We can and should attempt major qualitative and quantitative progress [with the goal of] truly substantial reductions in our strategic arsenals."

11/04/81 -- Testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Secretary Haig commented on the timetable for starting the next round of SALT negotiations:

- "We hope that negotiations can began as early as next spring. But ...arms control negotiations cannot be conducted in a political vacuum."

10/19/80 -- Governor Reagan described the SALT II treaty as "basically flawed" because it does not reduce armaments and stated: "As president, I will immediately open negotiations on a SALT III treaty. My goal is to begin arms reductions. My energies will be directed at reducing destructive nuclear weaponry in the world -- and doing it in such a way as to protect

fully the critical security requirements of our nation."

01/03/80 -- President Carter requested that the Senate delay consideration of the SALT II treaty because of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

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