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MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

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4/26/11

March 24, 1984

MEMORANDUM FOR ROBERT C. MCFARLANE

SIGNED

FROM:

BOB LINHARD *Bob*

SUBJECT:

NSC Meeting on Nuclear Arms Control in 1984
Tuesday, March 27

Attached at Tab I is a memorandum for your signature which:

- (1) briefs the President on Tuesday's NSC meeting;
- (2) provides the Intelligence Community paper on Soviet interests in arms control in 1984 for his review (Tab A); and
- (3) forwards to him Secretary Weinberger's memorandum and those memoranda from other NSC principals on the same subject (Tab B).

The memorandum for the President goes into a bit more detail than usual on the more sensitive aspects of the meeting. Tab II provides a more pro forma NSC meeting memorandum (without memoranda from NSC principals attached) that you may wish to use with a bit wider audience as necessary. Suggested talking points for your use at the meeting will be provided later. We do not recommend talking points for the President's use.

Your memorandum for the President (Tab I) does the following:

-- It identifies the issue for the NSC meeting to be: What are Soviet interests in START and INF in 1984 and how should the political context in this election year affect US actions in these areas?

-- It explains that an Intelligence Community paper (Tab A) has been circulated to NSC principals to support the discussion of Soviet interests. However, due to the sensitivity of the discussion of the political context for US nuclear arms control in 1984, no interagency discussion paper on this subject was prepared. Rather, we have invited NSC principals to provide their thoughts directly to him via memorandum prior to the meeting.

-- It explains that those memoranda that we have received for him from NSC principals to this point are attached at Tab B. Others will be forwarded as they are received. It notes that these memoranda have not been circulated to other NSC principals for their review.

-- In framing both the meeting and the President's preparations, it notes that the primary focus of this NSC meeting should be on the issue of the US political context and how it affects US options and decisions in 1984. It explains that the central point for NSC discussion should be views expressed in Secretary Weinberger's memorandum to the President.

-- It summarizes Secretary Weinberger's argument by noting that the Secretary feels that we should assess whether there is now any likelihood of Chernenko being more accommodating in START and INF before the election. If

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the answer is no, given the US political context and Soviet understanding of that context, Secretary Weinberger believes that we should immediately implement a strategy that permits you to set the terms for the arms control debate and establish the foundation for defending our last three years of activity in rearmament and arms control before such actions could be seen evidence of the Administration being on the defensive in a political campaign.

-- It recommends that the main purpose of Tuesday's NSC meeting should be to examine carefully the validity of this argument.

Turning to the material at Tab B, the memoranda that we have received for the President from other NSC principals include a number of proposals on a range of arms control issues that NSC staff would prefer not go to the President without the benefit of some critical NSC staff appraisal. However, given the time and the situation, we see no alternative other than forwarding them to the President now as promised. To square this circle, your note to the President explains that while the memoranda received do address the thrust of Secretary Weinberger's argument to some degree, unfortunately, most appear to have used the opportunity to argue for specific initiatives in START, INF, and other areas -- many of which require more detailed analysis and discussion before being seriously considered for implementation. It recommends that the President read and note the memoranda provided by the various NSC principals prior to the NSC, but that:

- (1) we maintain the focus of Tuesday's meeting on the validity of Secretary Weinberger's argument; and
- (2) the President not endorse and avoid comment on the other specific initiatives proposed in the various memoranda until we can provide to him additional analyses of these initiatives.

On this point, your memorandum concludes with the commitment that we will come back to the discussion of various initiatives in START, INF and other fora at a later time based on the results of Tuesday's discussions. If possible, NSC staff would recommend that you personally underscore this point in your discussions with the President prior to the NSC meeting.

Recommendation

That you approve the memorandum at Tab I and forward it with its attachments (Tabs A & B) to the President.

Approve PCM Disapprove _____

That in your discussions with the President you reinforce the caveats suggested above concerning the range of initiatives suggested in the various memoranda.

Approve PCM Disapprove _____

That you use the NSC briefing sheet at Tab II to inform others about the details of the meeting as appropriate.

Approve PCM Disapprove PCM

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Concurrence: R. Lehman, ^{Roy} S. Kraemer ^{SK}

Attachments:

- Tab I - Memorandum for the President (TS/S)
- Tab A - Intelligence Community Paper on Soviet Interest in Arms Control Negotiations in 1984 (S)
- Tab B - Memoranda from NSC Principals (S)
 - 1. Secretary Weinberger's Memo (TS/S)
 - 2. Ambassador Adelman's Memo (S)
 - 3. Ambassador Rowny's Memo (S)
 - 4. Ambassador Nitze's Memo (S)
- Tab II - Briefing Sheet on NSC Meeting (S)

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