

(orig under SALT)

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CIA 2041

COUNTERING COUNTERFORCE

# SALT II— A Call to Disarm

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SALT II is an attempt at a joint arms-planning arrangement between the military and national-security bureaucracies of the United States and the Soviet Union. Under the agreement, the Soviets will dismantle 250 strategic but vulnerable missiles. Although the missiles are outmoded, the Soviet commitment should nevertheless be counted as an impressive achievement of American negotiators. On the other hand, SALT II does not touch or transform the institutional structure of the U.S. national-security state, its assumptions or purposes. Nor, for that matter, does it alter the assumptions of the Russian security and military apparatus, or the bureaucratic mind set of its military and national-security planners.

The Soviet interest in signing the SALT II agreement is primarily political. Brezhnev and other Soviet leaders see it as a way of relieving the sense of national encirclement that the U.S.S.R. has harbored for hundreds of years. A grand alliance with the United States has been the goal of Communist leaders since 1945. Brezhnev and Gromyko want to leave the Russian political scene having accomplished what Molotov, Malenkov, Bulganin and Khrushchev failed to bring about.

The support for the treaty by American leaders derives from their perception of it as a means of controlling adventurous elements among politicians and the bureaucracy. SALT II is not intended to change a fundamental tenet of American foreign policy—this country's "leadership of the Free World." Rather, it is based upon the political and tactical grounds of co-opting the more "rational" factions within the national-security bureaucracy into ratification machinery. SALT II is seen as a planning process involving military and national-security groups from the Departments of State and Defense, the Central Intelligence Agency and the National Security Agency, as well as the National Security Council. These groups are by and large made up of sober people, conservative in outlook and, within the framework of their world, not "crazy." If the treaty is passed, those who are made a part of the process will be strengthened. They will be assigned "joint planning" responsibilities related to arms control. This involvement

might make some of them more open to arms limitations. On the other hand, if there is a defeat of the treaty in the Senate this group's elevation will cease, and the bureaucrats may well conclude that only bellicosity is rewarded.

If the present Democratic leadership wins the 1980 election and there is no treaty, the arms race will proceed at a much faster pace. If the Republicans win with a right-wing nationalist candidate and there is a treaty, it is possible that the SALT II group within the Government will be able to stalemate the war hawks. But if the Republicans win in the absence of a treaty, there will be no such group inside the national-security bureaucracy to brake the inertial momentum toward a more warlike stance or war itself. Further, one cannot expect the Senate to be a moderating voice during this period, because it is likely to have more conservative members after the 1980 elections than it presently has. Almost three times as many Democratic Senators stand for re-election in 1980 as do Republicans.

A move to the political right tinged with nationalist aggressiveness will strengthen American planners and politicians who argue that our willingness to spill blood will prove to the Russians and other political adversaries, as well as to our allies, that this country is determined to retain its world leadership. Under John Connally or Ronald Reagan the pace would be further quickened, and the national-security planners, to please their masters, will seek to resurrect belligerent war plans previously discarded as impractical.

With improved independent technical-intelligence verification of the missile and arms development of the Soviet Union, increased military expenditures for building the MX, the addition of the Trident submarine and submarine-launched ballistic missiles to the fleet, and an increase in the numbers of tactical nuclear weapons and missile-delivery planes in Europe, the chance for a successful first strike in a "controlled" nuclear war against Russia will be seen as much greater than it has been in the past.

One may confidently predict that Russian national-security planners will seek to increase their technical intelligence, including adding a number of bases and listening posts. They will claim that this is the only way to guard against a first strike. They will press ahead in their MIRVing activities and seek bases outside the Soviet Union. The C.I.A. and N.S.A. will likewise demand a quantum leap in their budgets for covert and technical intelligence activities as the price for their initial support of the treaty. This price will get even higher after the treaty is signed. The C.I.A.'s supporters are claiming that it has been almost mortally wounded over the last several years by "irresponsible" attacks. Further, other voices within the military will call for new intelligence listening posts to replace those lost in Iran. Thus, ironically, an increase in the number of U.S. military and intelligence bases will now be justified as necessary for arms control.

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Even with the treaty apparatus operating under conditions of the utmost trust between the parties, the inertial direction of the arms race will continue upward. More important will be the fears and hopes of the national-security and political elites in both nations. To justify an increase in weaponry the conservatives are claiming that it is Russia that can mount a first strike because of its new, heavier MIRV-carrying missiles. It is true that the nature of nuclear war-fighting capability has changed over the last twenty years. American nuclear strategists have convinced their Soviet counterparts to change their defense views from deterrence to a strategy of fighting a nuclear war, and from disarmament to arms control. We taught them the value of MIRVing, pinpoint targeting and smaller nuclear bursts. The Soviet Union has sought, like the United States, to develop nuclear-war options beyond deterrence. This change in doctrine has created the "need" for a larger and more varied system of nuclear missiles. Each side has thousands of its thermonuclear weapons aimed at the other's. Both the Soviet Union and the United States have integrated nuclear missiles into their political and diplomatic strategies as well as their military strategy—even though planners long ago ran out of military targets. The horror is that while it was once thought that nuclear Armageddon would end within several hours, we are now finding serious men talking about controlled wars—long, drawn-out engagements using nuclear weapons. Such wars are neither conceivable nor in either nation's interest. The possibilities of maintaining command and control in the context of nuclear exchange are very low indeed. The likelihood is that communications systems on both sides will be jammed almost immediately, which would result in submarines, bombers and missile crews operating independently of central authority.

The nuclear pirates and marauders with missiles, who will almost certainly appear during a nuclear exchange, would threaten the very existence of the nation-state system. So it is little wonder that even the most cynical of statesmen favor "putting a cap on the arms race," as Henry Kissinger put it when he negotiated the first SALT agreement. "Both sides," Kissinger added, "have to convince their military establishments of the benefits of restraint, and that is not a thought that comes naturally to military people on either side."

The defenders of SALT II usually argue that not supporting the treaty encourages groups like the Committee on the Present Danger and the American Security Council to plump for an even faster-paced arms race, including the testing of each other's will and military might in battle. This is by no means an insignificant argument. The hard-line policy planners who proclaim themselves protectors of Western civilization against the Tartar hordes see the Russians as "teddy bears" who could be defeated in war

because they are encircled by the world's most powerful nations and have undependable allies. But the Russians are also portrayed as militarily stronger than ever, expansionist in purpose and paranoid in behavior. Both views sustain the ideologically conservative military planner in his belief that the Russians must be given their comeuppance relatively soon. But the consequences of the defeat of SALT II are not likely to be what former national-security planners like Paul Nitze and Eugene Rostow envisage. Actually, the Senate's rejection of the agreement would cause the U.S.S.R. to feel even more isolated and surrounded. Members of the Polit-

buro who favored détente would surely lose their political power, while the military hard-liners would be in the ascendancy. Soviet leaders would step up their wooing of West Germany, seek to settle differences with China and act as if a war were inevitable. The Soviet war hawks are quite prepared to foment international turbulence, and there will be no disarmament advocates within their bureaucracy to counterbalance them.

American hawks argue that the United States would win any test of military strength with the U.S.S.R. because we have fought in several wars since 1945, while the Russian military remained untested in battle and has grown rusty. This is usually offered as proof that Soviet leaders will soon test their armed forces.

The war hawks who would rather not be bothered with the niceties of a U.S.-Soviet joint arms-planning arrangement are, however, fearful that a repudiation of SALT II by the Senate will encourage the defense and foreign affairs ministries of other nations to speed up their own military preparations, including nuclear-weapons development. Otherwise they will not be able to defend their territories and interests against incursion and likely war among the great powers. Other nations will take the Senate's rejection as a devil's blessing to build up their own nuclear arsenals.

It is not surprising that even the war hawks among U.S. military planners fear this situation. The nuclear game of chess (or is it poker?) between the Russians and themselves looks stable in comparison to the anarchy of nuclear proliferation and catalytic war situations in which individual nations arm to the teeth and pursue their own ambitions and hatreds. Thus, the SALT II agreement has an important symbolic influence on the direction of the world

arms race. If the Senate rejects the treaty, war and defense planners in other nations will have all the more reason to conclude that arms control is an empty game.

We thus find ourselves in a tragic dilemma—one in which any action is dangerous and will predictably add to our overall problems. The question becomes whether support for the SALT II agreement will lead to smaller, less disastrous problems than not supporting it. In my view, the answer to this question is yes.

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There is, however, a qualifier. This affirmative answer is linked to the manner in which the agreement is supported and the political stratagems employed to pass the treaty. Senators Mark Hatfield, George McGovern and William Proxmire are politically correct in questioning whether the treaty would be an advance over the present situation. Their apparent intention is to signal the President that the liberal segment of the Senate will not have its support of this treaty taken as a silent assent to a counterforce or limited-counterforce strategy and a faster arms race.

Recently, Senator Hatfield told President Carter that he was deeply concerned about the Administration's adoption of a counterforce strategy. Hatfield and other Senators have made it clear that the creation of a counterforce arms system would outweigh the benefits of a SALT II agreement. Unfortunately, counterforce was sanctified into official doctrine by then Defense Secretary James Schlesinger in January 1974, and has been the preferred strategy ever since. Already we have purchased weapons to sustain this strategy, and it would be extraordinarily difficult to interrupt it. Even George M. Seignious 2d, the head of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and the President's chief arms-control adviser, urges that the United States adopt the MX system to assure itself of counterforce capability.

From a progressive perspective the only courses of action are changing the institutionalized military and national-security nature of states—the primary cause of the arms race—and devising policies that offer an alternative to the military's disastrous doctrines. The political questions to be considered thus become:

(1) Can conversion planning away from the arms race and toward peaceful economic enterprises take place between the Soviet Union and the United States through diplomatic negotiations, as well as within their respective borders? Is such planning and implementation activity inspectable?

(2) Is it possible to make clear statements and undertake actions that show the SALT II agreement is not contradictory to disarmament?

(3) Finally, is there a means (such as mass actions) to get across to the hawks that war and war planning are not the highest purposes of civilization, but rather perversions of them, which must be judged as criminal activities? (I realize that the question of liberation struggles against racist and fascist regimes will remain, but from an international standpoint, and from the standpoint of the United States, these struggles are local, and must be judged in the light of the common strivings of humankind for human rights. Besides, there is little prospect of, say, blacks in South Africa using nuclear weapons in their struggle. It is the white South Africans who have the nuclear capability, after all, and who are likely to use it.)

The national debate over SALT II provides an opportunity for organizations to put forward proposals in communities, cities and Congress that point more clearly in the direction of arms limitation than does the agreement that Carter and Brezhnev signed in Vienna. One such proposal would be a resolution or an amendment (the form it would take would depend on the nature of the Senate debate, but preferably an amendment by the Senate) which would make clear that the United States wanted to begin discussions on international conversion and plans to end the arms race. This question would necessarily include pressing proposals for conversion of the present national-security structures that in an automatic, almost unconscious manner produce the arms race. Thus, an amendment to SALT II should be drawn up that outlines immediate steps for joint discussions on conversion, budget limitations and ways to reinstitute the framework of disarmament laid out in the McCloy-Valerian talks of 1962. Those discussions were committed to seeking comprehensive world disarmament in stages.

Second, this amendment should take into account the various resolutions of the United Nations on disarmament and conversion, including the statements of the U.S. representative. This would be the prime signal of a shift in war planning. By highlighting the way that the arms race is institutionalized in the SALT II agreement, we will be exposing its economic and political causes. The policy consequences of armaments that other nations should bear in mind are dramatized in the dollar increases for tactical nuclear weapons, conscription, MX development and so on.

An additional resolution or amendment to the SALT II treaty would place the signatories on record as favoring a moratorium on the design, development, production or acquisition of all major weapons systems. Such an amendment would lead to formal negotiations within the McCloy-Valerian framework, and that of the United Nations disarmament discussion. Another amendment should be drawn up stating that the SALT II agreement is not meant to stimulate military expenditures, weapons development and testing, etc., in areas not covered by immediate agreement. It is likely that this kind of amendment or resolution would have the broadest support within the Senate, and should be the minimal position taken by those in favor of ending the arms race. Resolutions of this nature should also be introduced in the House of Representatives as a way of emphasizing that Congress as a whole wants a disarmament process.

Finally, resolutions should be drawn up making clear that the arms race itself is a moral and political disaster for American and world civilization, that we are all in mortal danger of genocidal crimes against humanity and that we must redouble our efforts to forge a new system of international security. It could be stated in this resolution that the United Nations Charter calls for the formation of an international security committee to fashion a world security arrangement. This article of the charter should be referred to in an amendment or resolution. Upon its being made a reality rests the hope that new security arrangements can be devised that will enable world civilization to avoid untold misery without abandoning the human need for liberation.