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**U.S. POLICY BLAMED**

# Soviet SALT Dilemma

By Oswald Johnston  
Star-News Staff Writer

**YALTA, USSR** — The sharp split within the U.S. government on how to negotiate an arms limitation deal at the Nixon-Brezhnev summit has presented the Russian leadership with a policy dilemma which may make any significant SALT agreement impossible.

Soviet officials here admit privately that a comprehensive strategic arms limitation agreement at this summit is out of reach. Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger has for several weeks ruled out a permanent treaty as "impossible."

But since the start of the current trip, Kissinger has pushed vigorously and publicly for presidential backing for some kind of half-way agreement: Specifically, one that would slow down the headlong Soviet rush toward installing multiple warheads (MIRVs) on most of their long-range missiles.

At a news conference in Brussels last Wednesday, the eve of the departure for Moscow, Kissinger bluntly declared it President Nixon's "duty" to act decisively on arms control no matter what "controversy" it would provoke in Washington.

**THIS STRONG** advocacy was coupled with a sharp and scornful counterattack against Kissinger's toughest adversaries on arms control, the Pentagon and Sen. Henry M. Jackson D-Wash. Taken together, the performance seemed clearly designed to press Nixon into a poli-

## Analysis

cy position on SALT that would back the Kissinger view and repudiate the Pentagon view.

At the same time, Kissinger was

just as clearly sending a message to the Russians, inviting them to rework their bargaining offer on the MIRV issue which the Americans had rejected as unacceptable back in March.

See SALT, A-5



Soviet leader Brezhnev makes a point talking with President Nixon in a Yalta garden. (Story on Page A-2).

—United Press International

# SALT

Continued from Page A-1

From conversations here with Soviet officials — mixed but in a position to express the general lines of government policy — it appears certain that the message has been received and understood.

But it is equally clear that the Soviet leadership is not quite sure how to respond in capsule their reasoning is as follows:

**SINCE** Communist leader Leonid Brezhnev has made a full commitment to negotiate with the United States, the tendency is to side with Kissinger against the arms control skeptics, who are denounced almost daily in the Soviet press.

But officials also recognize that Nixon is in serious political trouble back home, damaged by Watergate and facing impeachment. "The great American Purge," one Soviet official called it.

Accordingly, there is fear of negotiating any arms agreement that would have to face congressional ap-

proval and, in the present political climate, possible defeat. The Arms Control and Disarmament Act requires congressional approval for any agreement that would reduce U.S. nuclear arms deployment.

The Soviets do not like to discuss the position of their party chairman, but it is the firm view of senior U.S. officials close to Kissinger's thinking that a setback to détente could seriously, perhaps fatally, hurt Brezhnev in the perpetual power struggle of Soviet politics.

Accordingly, some Soviet officials have been trying to slow down the push toward a MIRV compromise. Kissinger has been sponsoring them, but they are urging, instead, that the negotiators settle for a general declaration of intention, perhaps a section of the final summit communiqué, rather than a hard and specific agreement.

But a mere "statement of intent" on SALT, full of generalities and few real commitments, to control weapons, might likewise

damage détente by provoking an outcry against a "cosmetic" and meaningless bit of summit window-dressing.

**DESPITE** the official Soviet posture of aloofness on Nixon's domestic troubles, the summit negotiators have to take them into account. And the fact that Kissinger is now embroiled in a housing policy dispute on the arms issue only makes the Soviet position more difficult.

In its crudest terms, the Watergate uneasiness takes this form: Be careful of signing deals with a president who might be impeached, because the Kremlin hawks could then pounce on the policy of détente with a disgruntled leader.

This attitude, ever so subtly, was reflected in Pravda's omission of the word "personal" when it treated Nixon's opening dinner toast to future relations between the two nations. Kremlinologists here are

maintain that the old-fashioned newspaper was by doing for domestic consumption, even though it is director and government spokesman Leonid Zaitsev, denied it categorically and denounced the American reporter who raised the point.

**MORE** generally, the Soviet leadership wishes to take the view that détente is too important to be upset by such things as Watergate, and there is no doubt that Kissinger himself would agree with them on that point.

"In two years Watergate will pass," one Soviet official observed. "After 11, who now worries about the Vietnam war? or LBJ?"

The unsettling prospect of a summit discussion on a security issue as fundamental as arms control at a time when the U.S. position is still unknown and perhaps undecided has, meanwhile, given rise to a whole new spate of rumors about a split between Kissinger and Nixon.

Much of the theorizing focuses on the question of whether Kissinger — his position in the administration weakened by his petulant threat to quit during his Salzburg news conference — overreached himself at Brussels when he tried to push Nixon along on SALT? The speculation took the form of full-blown theory in

a recent column in the New York Times column by Ileana Saffire. When Saffire queried Patrick Buchanan and other columnists, they fall the flat denial the

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