

TS - HK - A 5126271

F. SALT Sensitive

Completely Outside the System

MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE/CODEWORD

March 26, 1974

State Dept. review completed

MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL SCOWCROFT

FROM:

*PZ* PETER ZIMMERMAN

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE  
INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

SUBJECT:

Response to Soviet MIRV Claim

MORI C03346268

Based on the information you provided Ben Huberman I sent off the attached cable to Jan Lodal late last night (Tab A).

As I indicated to you on the phone, I can come up with only one possible explanation for the Soviet claim that they have three MIRVs on their missiles. As you know, the Soviets have never distinguished between MRV and MIRV systems in their proposals. The same Soviet expression RGCH (roughly "separating warhead") is used for both MRV and MIRVs. Moreover, they are currently engaged in extensive deployment of an existing MRV system with three warheads - the SS-11 Mod 3. I can only conclude that Brezhnev may somehow have been focused on this ongoing Soviet deployment program rather than their new MIRV ICBMs which are still in flight test.

On the other hand as the cable says, the probability that all of the new MIRV ICBMs have only three RVs is estimated by CIA to be essentially zero. Thus the Soviet claim can only be the result of either honest confusion on the part of Brezhnev or an incredibly blatant Soviet attempt at deception that cannot possibly succeed.

As you can well imagine, we would have gone off on a wild goose chase without your helpful excerpt from the reporting cable.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE/CODEWORD

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DEFINMED  
DE WTE #1407 0850516  
D 260425Z MAR 74  
FM THE SITUATION ROOM //TOHAK 16//

TO JAN M LODAL

T O P S E C R E T EYES ONLY CONTAINS CODEWORD WH40773

TOHAK 16

VIA BLACK PATCH

TO: JAN M. LODAL (KISSINGER PARTY)  
FROM: PETE ZIMMERMAN  
SUBJECT: YOUR INQUIRY ON SOVIET MIRVS

JAN,

1. FROM OUR PHONE DISCUSSION AND SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSIONS AMONG OURSELVES I TAKE YOUR QUESTION TO BE ESSENTIALLY, QUOTE WHAT IS THE LIKELIHOOD THAT NEW SOVIET ICBMS HAVE ONLY THREE MIRVS UNQUOTE. OUR ANSWER, DISCUSSED IN MORE DETAIL BELOW, IS THAT THE PROBABILITY IS NEAR ZERO THAT ALL THREE OF THE NEW ICBMS CARRY ONLY THREE MIRVS.

2. OUR INFORMATION SHOWS THAT THE THREE NEW ICBMS (SS-X-17, 18 AND 19) HAVE CARRIED OR CAN CARRY MORE THAN THREE REENTRY VEHICLES. THE BEST INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON THE NUMBER OF MIRVS IS ON THE SS-X-19. (NOTE: THE TWO MRV ICBMS PRESENTLY DEPLOYED - SS-9 MOD 4 AND SS-11 MOD 3 - HAVE THREE RVS EACH).

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\*\*\*\*\* W H S R C O M M E N T \*\*\*\*\*

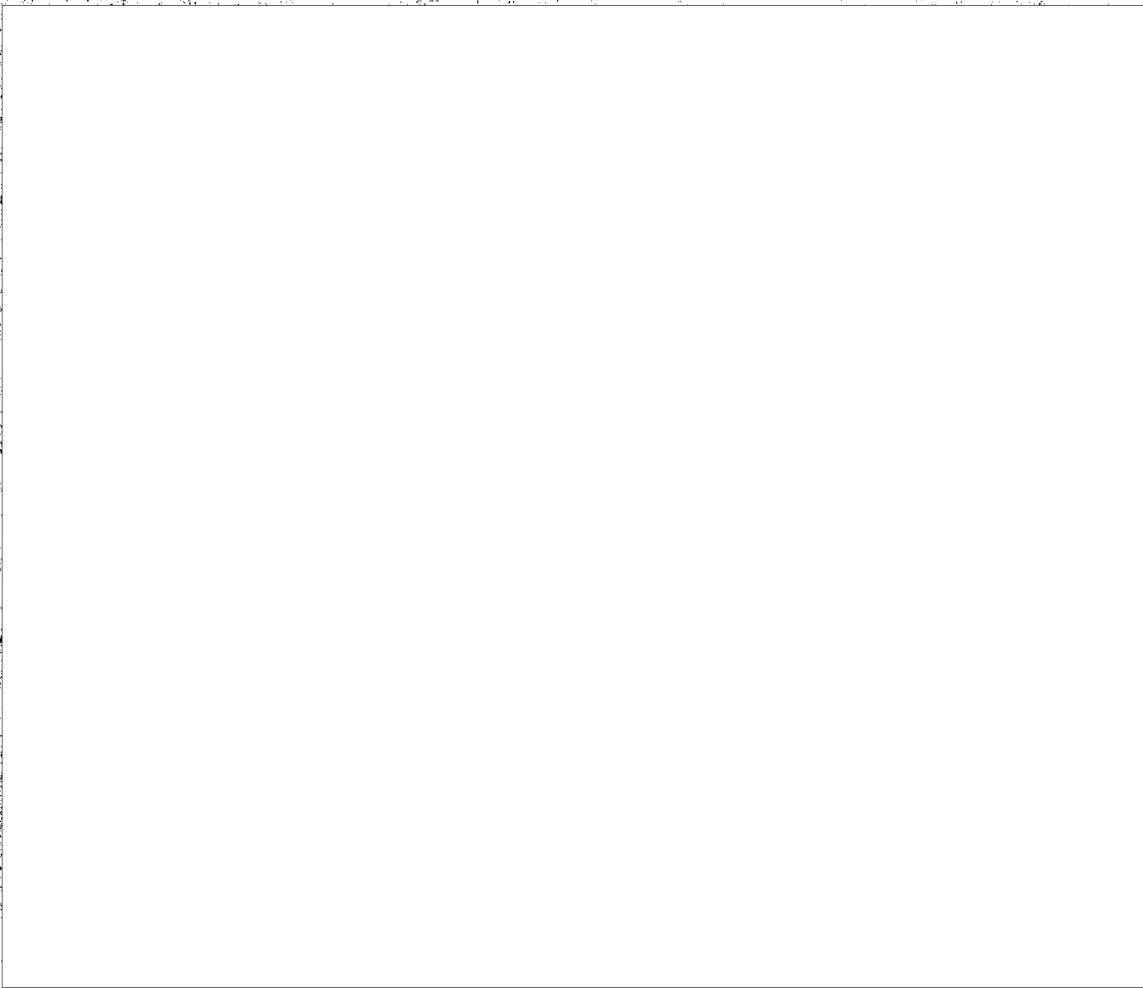
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7. IN CONCLUSION, WE CAN FIND NO PLAUSIBLE EXPLANATION FOR THE STATEMENTS ATTRIBUTED TO THE SOVIETS, I.E. THEY ARE IN FACT TALKING ABOUT THEIR NEW REPEAT NEW ICBMS. AS NOTED ABOVE, THE EXISTING MRV SYSTEMS (SS-9 MOD 4 AND SS-11 MOD 3) DO NOT CARRY 3 RVs AND THE SOVIETS HAVE NOT DISTINGUISHED BETWEEN MRV AND MIRV IN THEIR PROPOSALS. IT SEEMS CONCEIVABLE THAT THIS COULD EXPLAIN THE CONFUSION. AS YOU KNOW, SOVIETS NOW EN- GAGED IN AN EXTENSIVE DEPLOYMENT OF EXISTING MRV SYSTEM (SS-11 MOD 3).

8. YOU ALSO MIGHT REMIND THE SECRETARY OF BREZHNEV'S STATE- MENTS LAST YEAR AT ZAVIDAVO TO THE EFFECT THAT ONE OF HIS NEW MISSILES COULD CARRY QUOTE 8 WARHEADS OF 1 MT EACH WITH ITS OWN COMPUTER UNQUOTE.

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9. HOPE THIS IS THE RIGHT QUESTION. PLEASE CABLE US WHEN YOU  
HAVE A CHANCE.

WARM REGARDS.  
0629

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