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PROTECTING U.S. INTERESTS AT THE GENEVA UMBRELLA TALKS

INTRODUCTION

Secretary of State George Shultz is to meet Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko on January 7 in Geneva for two days of talks on a broad range of arms control issues. When this meeting was announced in late November, it was touted as a dramatic breakthrough in superpower relations that would lead to early agreements.

High expectations, however, are premature and founded more on wishful thinking than on a realistic understanding of the purpose of the talks. They reflect the traditional and costly American inclination to confuse the process of talking with substantive progress. In fact, both sides merely agreed to sit down and try to hammer out a new agenda for future negotiations. The meeting will be no more than a discussion of the format and substance of future negotiations. Instead of marking the resolution of the impasse, it is a forceful reminder of the profound disagreements separating both sides regarding the content and goals of future negotiations.

The U.S. must resist the temptation of assuming that Moscow is approaching Geneva in the same way that Washington is. There is no evidence of a change of heart in Moscow and little reason to expect Soviet flexibility in future talks. If Washington misreads Moscow's intentions, it could imperil U.S. security by inviting pressures for concessions, almost irresistible on political grounds, simply to maintain the momentum of the negotiations. Moscow's readiness to resume the arms control dialogue is related primarily to its determination to derail the Reagan Administration's 1983 Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). Moscow puts high priority on getting the U.S. to halt research and development of defensive technologies against nuclear attack that would erode the Soviet edge in offensive nuclear weapons.

The President should announce before the Shultz-Gromyko meeting that the U.S. will not offer any prior concessions and that it will accept restraints on its weapons programs only as part of a negotiated, comprehensive, and balanced package of arms control measures. He should make clear that the Strategic Defense Initiative will not be compromised during the negotiations. The U.S. must not accept restrictions on SDI research and testing that could eliminate U.S. options to move toward true defensive deterrence. Finally, the President should state that the U.S. will examine Soviet proposals carefully with respect to their impact on U.S. and allied security, verifiability, and contribution to an overall reduction of nuclear forces.

BACKGROUND: THE SOVIET GAME PLAN FOR ARMS CONTROL

Moscow lost considerable prestige when it failed to prevent NATO's deployment in November 1983 of the new intermediate-range missiles (Pershing IIs and Ground-Launched Cruise Missiles--INF). Its pressure tactics, culminating in the November 23, 1983, walkout from the Geneva talks and defiant threats to take steps to counter the missiles' "destabilizing effect" did not intimidate the West European public enough to force governments to renege on their commitment to accept U.S. missiles. Instead, Moscow's heavyhandedness and refusal to return to the bargaining table has caused a slow but continuing shift in West European public opinion. Moscow, rather than the U.S. and NATO, is now viewed as the principal roadblock to nuclear disarmament.

Yet Moscow has not abandoned its hopes that public obsession with progress on arms control will impel Western leaders to offer concessions. Even while it was trying to boost the Mondale presidential candidacy, Moscow carefully set the stage for its arms control offensive. In summer 1984, Moscow launched a shrewd three-pronged strategy to extract coveted concessions from the Reagan Administration as a hedge against its reelection and to frame the agenda for future negotiations.

First, in late June, Soviet President Konstantin Chernenko proposed that talks on preventing the militarization of space convene in September at Geneva. The White House initially rightly insisted that any talks on defensive weapons would have to encompass the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) and Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) agenda. Under pressure not to appear inflexible, however, the White House announced its willingness to meet in Vienna "without preconditions." Reagan apparently also felt pressured to proclaim in his September 24 U.N. General Assembly speech that the U.S. wants to engage Moscow in "umbrella talks," so called because they would cover a broad range of arms control issues.

Second, after ten months of stonewalling, Gromyko accepted a White House invitation for a series of talks in Washington in late September 1984. While the Administration interpreted this

as a signal of Soviet desire to reopen the dialogue, Moscow's intention was to smoke out the White House, build up expectations, and strengthen the influence of those within the Administration who favored opening negotiations right after the elections.

Third, Chernenko told the Washington Post in a rare interview in mid-October that Moscow was ready to resume arms talks if only the U.S. were to "prove in deeds" its sincerity by making concessions on at least one of the major issues of concern to Moscow. The White House dismissed these demands, recognizing them as attempts to take advantage of the U.S. elections.

The subtleties of the Soviet strategy went largely unnoticed. Thus when Chernenko, only eleven days after the U.S. election, proposed to start talks on a new arms control agenda he surprised even the most fervent detentists within the State Department. Yet Moscow knew what it was doing. To a great extent it has extricated itself from the repercussions of its disastrous Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces derailment strategy, seized the initiative, and placed the U.S. and NATO on the defensive. The current debate within the Reagan Administration indicates a growing awareness of the serious problems inherent in the talks that were brought about by its own good intentions.

THE PROBLEMS OF UMBRELLA TALKS: MOSCOW'S LEVERAGE

Washington and Moscow approach the meeting with opposite objectives. The Soviets want to negotiate what they insistently call the "demilitarization" of space. Washington and its allies want to reduce offensive arms. The preliminary talks should not be taken lightly. The U.S. must enter them with clearly defined goals as well as a thorough understanding of how the choice of the format could shape the outcomes of subsequent substantive negotiations. A key consideration should be to reduce as much as possible Soviet leverage to play the U.S. off against its allies and to scuttle the Strategic Defense Initiative.

Moscow has set its sights on enlisting West European support for its proposal to prevent the "militarization" of space. During his visit to Britain in mid-December, Politburo member Mikhail Gorbachev, reportedly the No. 2 man in the Kremlin, lobbied intensely on behalf of the Soviet agenda. He passed up no opportunity to play on West European uneasiness about SDI in the hope that NATO governments will use their influence with Washington. Moscow changed its priorities and dropped its past preconditions on resuming bargaining on offensive weapons, including INF. It then substituted demands for concessions on SDI. In fact, Moscow may even be prepared to offer a compromise on INF and/or START so as get the U.S. to cancel its SDI program.

To minimize the possibility of Moscow succeeding, the U.S. should at this point reject any direct linkage between talks on offensive and defensive weapons. For the same reason, the U.S.

should refuse to fully integrate the START and INF agendas, an idea that has garnered considerable support among the West European allies and in the State Department. Finally, the U.S. should not agree to a moratorium on either anti-satellite weapons (ASAT) testing or INF deployment.

PROTECTING SDI: LEARNING FROM HISTORY

As the White House is preparing for the preliminary talks with Moscow, the Departments of State and Defense appear locked into a fierce quarrel on the negotiating strategy to pursue. Their dispute reflects profound philosophical differences on the purpose of arms control and the proper way to negotiate with the Soviet Union.

Because of its institutional interest in concluding agreements and the desire to avoid diplomatic confrontation with the West Europeans, the State Department has been pressing for two concessions to Moscow even before the Shultz-Gromyko talks start: a moratorium on ASAT testing and an offer to restrict testing of technologies relevant to SDI. Moreover, it wants to use the SDI program as a bargaining chip to entice Moscow to reduce its heavy SS-18 and SS-19 missiles to the levels proposed by the U.S. in START.

SDI Trade-off

The political leadership in the Defense Department opposes prior concessions and is loath to turn SDI into a bargaining tool. But some military professionals are more inclined to trade SDI to avoid cuts in offensive weapons. At stake too is bureaucratic turf; few careers so far have been enhanced by SDI, while much of the brass owes their promotions and power to established weapons systems. While Defense is willing to negotiate restraints on ASAT and SDI as part of a comprehensive agreement, it refuses to simply view both programs as means to force Soviet concessions on offensive weapons. It wants to protect both programs on the basis of their intrinsic merit. Moreover, it argues correctly that the "bargaining chip" theory was repudiated by Moscow through its offensive buildup in the wake of the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty of 1972.

SDI Moratorium

It has been suggested that, at a minimum, the U.S. should propose restrictions on the development of defensive technologies. However, the SDI program currently is no more than a research effort to explore the utility of a variety of technological concepts for defense against nuclear weapons. The different approaches to defense now under consideration hinge on a determination of the engineering feasibility of advanced technologies, of which many are still in the conceptual stage. Extensive testing is required to ascertain the most promising technologies and to integrate them into a defense architecture for future development. Therefore, to agree on a moratorium on testing at this point would kill SDI.

The State Department's call for moratorium on testing and for using SDI as a bargaining tool rests on the erroneous assumption that the U.S. can always resume testing should negotiations fail. Yet even the father of detente, Henry Kissinger, warns against this, recalling that "no moratorium in the arms field has ever been ended by the United States, because negotiations never fail unambiguously, and because no president is eager to tempt the political storm such a step would cause." A moratorium would thus be tantamount to a unilateral renunciation of ASAT and SDI.

Indeed, a moratorium would foreclose the option of ever using SDI for negotiating leverage or incorporating defensive weapons in some arms agreement. The U.S. must use the negotiating process to seek Soviet agreement to reconfiguring nuclear forces in a way that enhances deterrence and eventually substantially reduces or eliminates the military and political utility of nuclear weapons.

ASAT Weapons Development

Another Soviet target in the Geneva talks is the U.S. ASAT weapons program. It has called for a moratorium on testing, largely to halt U.S. development of a small interceptor missile that can be fired from an F-15 aircraft at 80,000 feet against a satellite in space and destroy it through direct impact. The U.S. must not accept any such limitation at this point, because this would leave Moscow with the only operational ASAT capability against low orbiting satellites. At a minimum, the U.S. must be permitted to develop a comparable capability to deter Moscow from employing its own.

Moreover, the technologies involved in the ASAT program are essentially inseparable from those for SDI. Given the broad scope of the SDI program and insufficient knowledge of various technology paths, it would be highly premature to accept limitations on ASAT technologies. While particular deployment restrictions might be considered, they should be strictly temporary measures.

THE INF AND START AGENDAS: RESIST PRESSURES FOR DEPLOYMENT MORATORIUM

West European leaders long have been pressing for steps to overcome the existing arms control impasse because of persisting domestic opposition to INF deployment and alarm over Soviet "countermeasures" which have been implemented. Therefore, West European governments look to the Geneva talks with great hopes for an end to the deadlock. NATO foreign ministers again rejected new concessions, at their annual summit in December, but the Geneva talks could unravel this unified position, as they will call for prompt gestures to promote agreement.

In West Germany, the opposition has long called for a moratorium on future missile deployment, a position shared by liberals in the U.S. Congress. Despite Chancellor Helmut Kohl's professed firmness, prominent politicians within his own party are peddling the idea of a moratorium on missile deployment while the negotiations are underway. The Dutch parliament voted in June 1983 to cancel deployment of 48 ground-launched cruise missiles provided the Soviets freeze SS-20 deployment at present levels and negotiations are resumed. Final decision will be made in November 1985 and until then a de facto moratorium will be in effect. A similar call for a moratorium came from the Belgian Christian Democrats, even though it was rejected their leader, Prime Minister Wilfried Martens.

Regrettably, the original reasons for NATO's 1979 deployment decision and for the simultaneous pursuit of rearmament and arms control have been obscured by the debate on how best to avert deployment. The principal reason, after all, was to counter Moscow's deployment of SS-20 missiles. Not only has this not changed, but Moscow continues to build its arsenal. Today some 378 mobile SS-20s, capable of obliterating West European capitals, are deployed inside the USSR. Though there are relatively few U.S.-Soviet differences standing in the way of agreement on INF, they are expressions of fundamentally diverging negotiation objectives that no moratorium will be able to resolve.

Moscow's INF Leverage

Moscow agreed to negotiations on INF as part of the Geneva talks because this was perhaps the only way to get the U.S. to discuss SDI. Moscow may now be willing to make concessions on INF because in the context of the umbrella talks INF are clearly now of subordinate importance.

Moreover, Moscow can manipulate INF to maximize its bargaining leverage on SDI and to confront the alliance with politically divisive choices. European anxieties about SDI figure highly in Soviet calculations and Moscow will calibrate its proposals to exploit them to the fullest. The U.S. and the West Europeans must not permit the Soviets to divide them. Close consultation in forging initial bargaining strategy, anticipating Soviet proposals, and preparing Western responses will be required to keep Moscow from sowing suspicions and discord among the allies. Success or failure will depend in large measure on their ability to resist demands for a moratorium on INF deployment and a merger between the INF and START agendas.

INF Deployment Moratorium

The assumption common to all moratorium proposals is that such a display of NATO restraint, now that talks are about to reopen, will boost their chances of success by putting pressure on Moscow to halt its own deployment and enter a compromise.

It is further contended that delaying NATO deployment by six months to a year will not upset the original deployment schedule as no additional missiles are slated for shipment to Europe until late 1985. A moratorium will help defuse public opposition in Western Europe and shore up alliance unity and stress U.S. commitment to arms control at this critical juncture. Consequently, the costs associated with a moratorium are considered negligible whereas its benefits are potentially enormous.

It is also being asserted that a moratorium on deployment will give Moscow incentives for restraint and compromise. Irrespective of their willingness to accept INF as part of the agenda at Geneva, the Soviets remain intransigent. They have not explicitly waived their demand for a complete withdrawal of all NATO missiles as a precondition for substantive negotiations. Despite the appearance of movement, the Soviet position on INF remains essentially unchanged.

There is thus no reason for NATO to alter its deployment policy. A proclamation of a moratorium at this point might vindicate Moscow's hardliners by giving the appearance of cracks in Western resolve, diminishing or eliminating altogether Soviet incentives to negotiate.

This "freeze now" and "reduce later" approach also tends to legitimize Soviet military advantages and may keep NATO ultimately from modernizing its nuclear forces. It will not assuage public opposition to deployment, but bolster the morale of the waning anti-nuclear movement. The political standing of governments backing deployment in their countries will also suffer. Given the uncertainties and risks of a moratorium, shaky governments will probably resist pressures to resume deployment in the event the talks fail within the allotted time. A moratorium would thus restore Moscow's ability to veto NATO deployment through behavior bargaining.

INF/START Merger

By proposing "umbrella talks", the administration accepted the notion of a "procedural merger" between the INF and START negotiations--without spelling out its scope. The U.S. now must take care not to establish explicit linkages between the three areas of discussion. Doing so risks indefinitely stalling the talks, increasing Soviet leverage, and straining NATO relations. The U.S. thus must reject any negotiating format that has the potential of holding agreement on one set of issues hostage to agreement on the others.

Equally damaging could be an approach that would treat INFs as a subcategory of strategic nuclear forces, whose deployment would be limited through a subceiling. This would resemble the piecemeal arms control approach dominating U.S.-Soviet negotiations during the 1970s. It entails the same flaws that have encumbered the SALT agreements. These so-called comprehensive

agreements were made up of a series of subceilings on particular types of delivery systems, like land- versus sea-based missiles, or the numbers of warheads, such as single versus multiwarhead missiles. A subordinate ceiling on INFs appears very attractive as it conforms to past efforts to establish artificial symmetries among the weapons systems in the superpower arsenals.

The piecemeal approach may have been of some use in dealing with highly dissimilar strategic forces. But it cannot be assimilated easily to INFs. For both the U.S. and the Soviet Union, INFs serve different military and political purposes. To treat these weapons under an overall umbrella agreement may raise trade-off issues that could complicate talks beyond solution. Equal subceilings for both sides are probably non-negotiable in light of Soviet obsession with theater nuclear superiority and desire to prevent any U.S. INF deployment in Europe. Admittedly, such a merger could possibly render it more difficult for Moscow to challenge the legitimacy of U.S. INF stationing in Europe, diluting the sharp dichotomy between "strategic" and "intermediate-range" weapon systems. But the political value of INFs as evidence of the U.S. commitment to the nuclear defense of Western Europe would diminish proportionately and, thus, fan anew the debate over "decoupling" of Europe from the U.S. strategic deterrent.

The worst approach would be to deal with all offensive nuclear weapons in fully integrated talks. Yet that appears to be the concept the Administration intends to pursue. Under an overall ceiling for offensive forces, both sides would be free to determine the configuration of their nuclear forces consistent with their political commitments and strategic doctrines. There are at least three cardinal flaws in such an approach:

First, even if the initial force mix were codified in the treaty and procedures were established for announcing subsequent changes in the force configuration, verifying compliance could be a nightmare. The military arsenals on both sides are not static but adapt constantly in response to changes in the international environment, new weapons developments by adversaries, technological breakthroughs, changes in military strategy and national political objectives. The degree of flexibility permitted by the treaty would confound verification by spy satellites and other electronic means. Even frequent physical inspections of launch sites, weapons depots, and perhaps nuclear weapons production plants would probably be insufficient to assure compliance.

Second, freedom to optimize the force configuration to suit national military and political strategy could never be absolute. If the current approach to limit missile launchers were retained, there would have to be some ceiling on the total number of warheads. Conversely, if the overall number of warheads were limited, their explosive power would have to be capped, and collateral limits on delivery systems would be necessary to avoid the evolution of serious destabilizing asymmetries. The U.S. addressed

this issue in START by proposing a mix of land- and sea-based systems designed to enhance crisis stability. Instead of facilitating verification, true integration of the talks would render an agreement virtually unverifiable. The virtues of this approach thus reside in its simplistic appeal which, however, harbors dangerous pitfalls.

Third, a fully integrated approach could force the U.S. to make policy choices between its nuclear commitment to NATO and strategic force posture requirements to deter Soviet attack on the U.S. Under a comprehensive limitation on launchers or warheads, a debate would ensue on whether the U.S. should deploy a significant portion of its allotment in form of vulnerable Pershing IIs and ground-launched cruise missiles so as to reassure the Europeans and maintain the credibility of extended deterrence. Because military arguments in favor of less vulnerable basing schemes are compelling, political repercussions for alliance cohesion could be disastrous.

CORRECTING COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

Proponents of a merger contend that INF/START belong naturally in the same forum. The following points are relevant: First, separate talks were initiated at European insistence. While obvious linkages between the two talks exist, it is far from clear that merging them would overcome the differences in the positions of both sides.

Second, the perceptions of coupling or decoupling effects of INF deployment are related only superficially to the existence of two separate forums of negotiations. They are rooted instead in widespread misunderstanding of NATO strategy and the logic of the deployment decision.

Third, NATO deliberately refrained from trying to match Soviet theater nuclear strength for political reasons that are well known. Should NATO accept numerical inferiority as part of an INF agreement that, on the whole, serves NATO interests, then this fact need not be obscured.

Fourth, while it is correct that some definitional problems may be more readily resolved if the talks are merged, new issues are bound to arise as the framework developed in the SALT/START process is jettisoned. Years of painstaking work may be required to create a new, mutually agreeable conceptual basis for negotiations.

Fifth, the INF negotiations aimed at limiting Soviet SS-20 missiles. The Soviets will resist any attempt to have the SS-20s counted as strategic systems. But as long as they are defined as theater systems, Western suspicions about a separate theater nuclear balance cannot be dispelled.

Sixth, a formula whereby to overcome Soviet resistance to a global agreement was proposed by the U.S. on September 22, 1983. While this offer has its shortcomings, Moscow reacted "favorably." It thus represents a good basis for future negotiations.

Seventh, it should not be assumed that Moscow favors merging the talks. A merger would impede Soviet attempts to interfere in NATO defense planning, manipulate European public opinion, and foil its attempt to gain legitimacy for theater nuclear superiority in Europe and bilateral nuclear parity with the U.S.

Third Country Nuclear Forces

The problem of accounting for British and French forces will not be resolved through a merger. Many Europeans endorse the Soviet position, because British and French forces will grow to about 1000 warheads by the early 1990s. Therefore, they are demanding that the U.S. compensate Moscow for these forces. There are compelling reasons for rejecting these demands. Among them:

First, both Britain and France reject the notion that their forces should be counted in U.S.-Soviet bilateral negotiations. They consider them strategic forces for minimal deterrence that could never be used for limited strikes against the Soviet Union. Their size and configuration are non-negotiable as long as the superpowers have not effected deep cuts in their own arsenals.

Second, the U.S. cannot negotiate on behalf of both countries without stirring a major dispute. France especially is very sensitive to patronizing by foreign powers and guards its interests with alacrity. It may be possible to reach some behind-the-scenes understanding with Britain to cancel its commitment to Trident II deployment, but it is unclear whether such a move would be in the U.S. interest.

Third, any compensation for third country forces would require the U.S. to reduce its forces to offset the planned growth of British and French forces. What may be a negligible concession at today's force levels may engender a significant disparity between U.S. and Soviet forces in the future.

Fourth, for the U.S. to compensate Moscow for British and French forces would mean to endorse the Soviet concept of "equal security." It would grant Moscow the right to global military superiority and set a dangerous precedent for future negotiations. The U.S. would trade essential equivalence in favor of inferiority. The political and strategic ramifications of doing so are staggering.

Fifth, British and French forces are no viable substitute for the U.S. nuclear guarantee and West Germany and other non-nuclear NATO countries legitimately would be alarmed. Since only U.S. forces can provide the link to the U.S. nuclear umbrella, any offset involving cancellation of U.S. deployment would sever the strategic bond which has maintained postwar security.

Finally, removal from Western Europe of U.S. intermediate-range nuclear forces would concede to Moscow regional hegemony and presage a new framework for European security. The Soviets have long declared their readiness to negotiate the elimination of French and British nuclear forces. Indeed, in the absence of a U.S. strategic nuclear commitment to Europe, the rationale for these forces will be lost unless they are combined to form the nucleus for a new independent, powerful European nuclear force--an unlikely prospect. Moscow would have attained the objective to which it long aspired: U.S. withdrawal from Western Europe and its domination by Soviet power.

CONCLUSION

Agreement by Moscow to sit down with the U.S. to thrash out a new framework for future arms control talks signifies neither a dramatic breakthrough nor sudden Soviet willingness to strike an equitable deal on curbing and reducing nuclear arms. Moscow and the U.S. arrive at Geneva with two very different agendas. The U.S., together with its allies, wants to overcome the impasse in the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) negotiations and, by doing so, reanimate the defunct Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (START) negotiations. By contrast, Moscow's principal purpose is to get the U.S. to abandon the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) program in much the same manner as it disbanded the anti-ballistic missile (ABM) program in the 1970s.

In Moscow's view, the talks on offensive weapons are subordinate and ancillary to this goal. Having failed in the contest for the hearts of the West Europeans, Moscow no longer sees INF deployment as a key issue; the U.S. strategic nuclear buildup has also become less menacing, given the uncertain future of the MX and other offensive weapons programs. But by accepting talks on offensive weapons, Moscow got the U.S. to place SDI on the agenda and attained significant bargaining leverage. Moreover, it regained the offensive in arms control.

The U.S. must be mindful of Soviet objectives. It must deny Moscow the opportunity to manipulate U.S. domestic and West European public opinion to force concessions detrimental to U.S. security. Key to these efforts is to rule out advance concessions, state at the very outset what is negotiable, and delineate a bargaining format. In this way the Reagan Administration can avert being entangled in interminable talks that paralyze Western defense programs, wreck alliance cohesion, fan pressures to relinquish crucial interests, and enable the Soviets to exploit the negotiations for political and military advantages.

For the past several weeks bureaucrats infighting within the Administration have conveyed lack of direction and objectives. This must stop as it will encourage Soviet inflexibility. Further, the U.S. has always been prone to negotiate with itself once negotiations grind to a halt and there is no reason for Moscow to

believe that public pressures for further concessions will not force the U.S. to relinquish its initial bargaining platform.

Therefore, the President must settle the internal dispute of the Administration before the talks begin. He must state unequivocally that SDI is not negotiable and that the U.S. will not allow the talks to interfere with the ongoing SDI research program or testing of ASAT technologies. Such a pronouncement should be included in an overall review of U.S. arms control objectives, the successes and failures of past negotiations, and the current state of the nuclear balance.

By stepping forth and discussing arms control and the strategic situation in such a frank and candid way, the President will help terminate speculation about the goals of U.S. arms control policy. He will reassert White House leadership within the Administration as well as relative to the Congress, rally domestic support, and contain allied pressures.

On March 23, 1983, the President directed the U.S. scientific community to harness its intellectual resources and employ its genius to devise methods to defend against nuclear weapons. Reagan's SDI offers Americans and the other inhabitants of the globe an exit, at least, from the nightmarish world of potential nuclear holocaust. Since the Reagan speech, numerous studies have furnished preliminary proof that his vision of rendering nuclear weapons obsolete is within reach of U.S. technical abilities, provided it is pursued with as much determination as was devoted to building the U.S. offensive deterrent. SDI is not only fully compatible with the U.S. START proposal but complementary in that it encourages reconfiguration and reduction of existing nuclear forces.

Therefore, the U.S. must reject Soviet proposals that merely establish a linkage between offensive and defensive forces for the purpose of prohibiting the development of the latter. Instead, the U.S. should use the talks to explain to Moscow the scope and direction of the U.S. program and the arms control opportunities resulting from a gradual transition by both sides to a defense oriented deterrence posture. If the U.S. convinces the Soviets that they cannot halt SDI, expand their strategic nuclear predominance, and maintain their nuclear monopoly in Europe, the Kremlin will be prepared to negotiate. Herein lies the true significance of the "talks about talks."

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