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MARK. E. VIA

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~~1ST~~ NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

THE NRO STAFF

October 21, 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: NSAM 156 Working Group Meeting - SALT Ratification

On October 20, I attended a meeting which was held at the State Department in response to the September 1 letter which Dr. McLucas sent to Ambassador Johnson. The purpose of the meeting was to initiate action toward recommending a policy for treating the National Reconnaissance Program while discussing "national means of verification" during ratification of SALT agreements. The following people were in attendance:

Defense - Mr. Lawrence Eagleburger
NRO - Major [REDACTED]
CIA - Dr. Donald Steininger
OST - Dr. John Martin
NSC - Dr. John Walsh
Mr. Barry Carter
NASC - Dr. David Elliott
NASA - Mr. David Williamson
ACDA - Mr. Richard Durham
State - Mr. John Shaw
Mr. W. E. Gathright

Mr. Shaw, the Chairman of the working group, began the meeting by passing out a broad and general outline of a prospective report. He felt that, in addition to our specific question, the subject of statements to the public and the press should also be taken into account. Mr. Shaw does not, at this

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time, feel that a tentative scenario should be created, however, a reasonably comprehensive report will be a goal. He also believes that Mr. Gerard Smith, Chief of the SALT Delegation, should be brought into the 156 deliberations as they progress.

Mr. Carter, NSC representative, interjected that the National Security Council, following the commencement of SALT VI, plans to undertake a larger study which will be concerned with the overall prospect of moving SALT agreements through the Congress. He felt that the 156 Committee effort should be expanded well beyond the NRO's intent. Mr. Carter offered the opinion that the NRO would probably need to be represented on the larger study which will be reviewed by the Verification Panel.

Mr. Shaw asked me to comment on what we had intended as the scope of the 156 deliberations. I responded by saying that we had intended that the Committee deliberate alternative ways to treat national means of verification, while under review, in order that adverse impact on the continued ability to conduct the NRP may be minimized.

Mr. Durham of ACDA interjected that the 156 forum seems to be proper for this kind of deliberation. Mr. Carter added that it may be appropriate to expand this review to consider the declassification and downgrading issue but displayed a high degree of naivete toward the problem. I stated that during the last few weeks, this issue had been examined once again and that none of the principals seemed to desire or see any need for considering downgrading or declassifying at this time.

Discussion then turned to the dealings with Congress and Dr. Steininger was queried as to the extent of Congressional knowledge of the NRO. He responded by saying that he thought that there were approximately 100 members of the House and the Senate who had been briefed to a variety of degrees on our programs. There was some discussion relating to the point that those who are briefed in the Congress are members of a "club" and that this club would likely have to be expanded.

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Mr. Carter once again expressed the point that this should be an exhaustive study and that "all the issues" should be faced. Mr. Shaw then went around the table soliciting opinions. Dr. Steininger supported our view that a study should concentrate on ratification of SALT as concerns the NRO, however, it would likely expand into other pertinent issues. Mr. Eagleburger added that the matter would have to be "played by ear" and that alternative courses of action should rightfully be considered during the current deliberations. Mr. Durham from ACDA stated that this issue appears to be similar to the verification of the Seabed Treaty and felt that national means may have to be exposed in order to get both Seabed and SALT through the Congress. This notion was discounted by the others in attendance.

The meeting concluded by Mr. Shaw stating that he would draft a strawman paper which will be as complete as possible for the present time and pass the paper to the working group for comments. I expect that the next meeting of the working group will occur sometime during the second or probably the third week in November. I feel that the meeting was quite good and that State is not predisposed to enter, in conjunction with ACDA, a go-around on the fact of issue. I gained a very distinct impression from the NSC representative that Dr. Kissinger wants to have a carefully planned procedure for moving SALT agreements through the Congressional and public scrutiny so that the U.S. is not embarrassed by undue delay in ratifying any agreements. The larger effort to be undertaken by the Verification Panel will likely include this present 156 effort as a major part of its plan.


Major, USAF

1 Attachment
Report Outline

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Report Outline

-- The Problem (general statement)

-- Background

- (1) Negotiating record
- (2) Congressional Consultations to date
- (3) NATO Consultations to date
- (4) Public statements (e.g., President's, Secretary of State's annual reports)

-- Recommendations

- (1) Background briefing of selected committees on verification capabilities (CIA) and negotiating record on verification (ACDA/STATE).
- (2) Recommended line to take in public Congressional hearings.
- (3) Recommended line to take in response to possible press queries.
- (4) Probably no need for further consultations with NATO on this issue.

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PM/DCA:JPShaw:sac:10/19/71
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