

Office of Current Production and Analytic Support

CIA Operations Center

News Bulletin

The Washington Times

FRIDAY, JANUARY 29, 1988 /

INF treaty safeguards unprecedented – Nitze

By Mary Belcher
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

The U.S.-Soviet treaty banning intermediate-range nuclear weapons contains "the most comprehensive and intrusive" safeguards against cheating in arms control history, President Reagan's top arms adviser told Congress yesterday.

"This does not, of course, guarantee that some INF missiles cannot be hidden away somewhere within the great expanses of the Soviet Union," Paul Nitze told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. "No verification regime could provide such assurance.

"It does, however, ensure that the Soviets could maintain a clandestine, militarily significant force only at great cost and risk, and with steadily decreasing reliability," he said.

"Without the ability to flight-test the missiles, the Soviets would question the effectiveness of these forces and their military value, especially over time."

The treaty would allow U.S. and Soviet experts to inspect one another's medium-range missile sites on short notice, provide continuous exchanges of information, and end all activities related to medium-range missile production and deployment.

Sen. Jesse Helms, North Carolina Republican, however, said the treaty is full of "loopholes" that the Soviets could easily slip through.

Mr. Helms, resuming his fight against the pact, has charged the Soviet Union is already violating the treaty by providing the United States with bad information about

the number of medium-range missiles in Soviet arsenals.

Mr. Helms said classified Defense Information Agency data indicate the Soviets could have up to 300 more medium-range missiles than the 650 they say they have.

"Why is the DIA sticking by its estimates when the State Department and CIA are sticking by Soviet declarations?" Mr. Helms asked, suggesting that the "books have been cooked."

"We don't need any book-cooking around here," he said. "We need the facts."

Mr. Nitze agreed that intelligence agency estimates vary. But, he said, the data the Soviets gave the United States three months ago are, "on the whole, within the bounds of our intelligence estimates."

Mr. Helms also has argued that the treaty would allow the Soviets to take the warheads, or nuclear devices, from the medium-range missiles they destroy and attach them to long-range strategic missiles.

"Practically, I don't know whether it would be feasible for them to do so," said Mr. Nitze, explaining that medium-range and long-range Soviet missiles are very different systems.

He said the treaty would not prohibit the Soviets from pointing long-range missiles at the same Western European targets their medium-range weapons now cover.

But "it generally is a waste of assets" to use more expensive long-range systems to do the work of medium-range missiles, he said. "It's not an intelligent thing to do."

Sen. Alan Cranston, California Democrat, said of Mr. Helms: "I don't think he has picked up any fol-



Arms control adviser Paul Nitze testifies before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee yesterday.

lowers, and each of his points have been handily knocked down."

Mr. Cranston is intent on keeping the INF treaty free of "killer" amendments that would force its renegotiation. The Senate majority whip has said he believes the treaty will be approved by the 67 votes required, but amendments could be added by a simple majority of 51 senators:

"I have some very serious questions about this treaty," said Sen. Larry Pressler, South Dakota Republican and the only other committee member likely to seek major changes in the treaty.

"I get a feeling people are saying we should just roll over and play dead, and if you offer an amendment you're not on the team," Mr. Pressler said.

Mr. Pressler wants the Soviets to agree to reduce the Warsaw Pact's conventional-force advantage over NATO before the INF treaty takes effect.

"I believe that would be very unwise," Mr. Nitze said. "It would be a mistake not to ratify this treaty because some other desirable end is not accomplished."