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# THE SOVIET ATTITUDE TOWARD DISARMAMENT



*Submitted by the*

**DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE**

*The following intelligence organizations participated in the preparation of this estimate: The Central Intelligence Agency and the intelligence organizations of the Departments of State, the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, and The Joint Staff.*

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# THE SOVIET ATTITUDE TOWARD DISARMAMENT

## THE PROBLEM

To assess the underlying motivations of Soviet disarmament policy and the probable Soviet position on the main disarmament issues.[1]

## CONCLUSIONS

1. Since about 1954 the USSR has laid increasing stress on disarmament issues as part of its peaceful competition strategy. The most significant factors underlying this development are: (a) increasing Soviet awareness of the destructiveness of nuclear weapons, which, reinforced by growing confidence that the USSR can ultimately outstrip the US by peaceful competition, leads to a desire to reduce the risks of nuclear war; (b) the Soviet belief that the exploitation of disarmament issues can contribute materially toward the achievement of key foreign policy goals — including relative weakening of the West, militarily and otherwise; (c) the attractiveness of diverting significant resources from military to other uses, so long as the USSR's relative military position is not impaired.

2. To date, however, the Soviet attitude toward disarmament agreements seems to be dominated by several major restraining factors, which add to the difficulty of reaching such agreements on any basis acceptable to the West. Chief among these are: (a) the caution of the Soviet leaders over risking the compromise of their newly gained nuclear posture by moving too far too fast in an untried and highly speculative field; (b) their deeply ingrained suspicion that the West is as yet interested in arms limitations only on a basis advantageous to itself; (c) their basic aversion to inspection, especially within their own frontiers; and (d) their probable belief that the USSR can still gain considerably by propaganda and unilateral actions, at minimum real cost to itself.

3. Hence we doubt that the Soviet leadership has yet arrived at any hard and fast position on disarmament issues. The Kremlin is now actively seeking negotiations on a nuclear test moratorium, a "nuclear-free" zone in Central Europe, and troop reductions in Europe — which it regards as lending verisimilitude to its disarmament posture, placing further pressure on the Western position, and

[1] We use the term disarmament in this estimate to describe the whole complex of issues connected with arms limitations and controls, force reductions and withdrawals, etc., and not in the absolute sense of abolition of armaments.

having other tangible advantages. We believe it is prepared to make some concessions, including limited inspection, for agreements on these issues, considering that it will gain more than compensatory advantages.

4. Soviet readiness to make concessions to obtain agreements on other issues will largely depend on how much the USSR can accomplish by its present tactics in achieving a unilateral weakening of the West. To the extent that Moscow can inhibit the use and deployment of nuclear weapons and create strong pressures for US withdrawal without further concessions, it may see little gain in modifying its present disarmament position, except in a tactical sense.

5. But if the West's deterrent power is maintained and strengthened, the Soviet leaders will almost certainly become more concerned over the prospective piling up of advanced nuclear armaments, with the heightened dangers of war by miscalculation. If at the same time they remain confident that they can achieve their ultimate objectives through "peaceful competition," the desirability of diminishing the threat of nuclear war by disarmament agreements may loom larger in their minds. In fact they would probably look upon progress toward certain disarmament measures as facilitating the "peaceful competition" strategy itself. Thus both foreign policy and security motivations may lead to growing Soviet interest in expanding the areas of serious disarmament negotiations and a corresponding willingness to pay a higher price for agreements than hitherto.

6. However, their basic view of Western hostility will impel the Soviet leaders to retain at least sufficient military deterrent power to meet what they regard as their minimum security needs. Furthermore, we believe that the USSR will enter any disarmament agreement with the intent at the same time to seek constantly to enhance its military capabilities and to achieve an eventual military superiority over the US.[2]

[2] The Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, USAF, believes that paragraph 6 suggests a Soviet willingness to curtail or limit the development of their military capabilities to a level of deterrence rather than to seek the early attainment of an overpowering military superiority. The Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, USAF, believes the paragraph should read as follows:

"Any agreements made by the Soviets in the field of disarmament will be entered into with the intention of improving their relative military strength and of furthering their drive toward world domination. In addition, any agreement will in no way lead them to lessen their efforts to achieve an overpowering nuclear delivery capability at the earliest possible time."

Closely related to the above judgment is the Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, USAF, preferred expression of paragraph 18 which sets forth more fully the reasoning which leads to these judgments.

## DISCUSSION

### I. UNDERLYING MOTIVATIONS

7. The disarmament issue has traditionally occupied a prominent place in Soviet diplomacy and propaganda, especially since World War II. Since about 1954, along with numerous other steps designed to give a less aggressive appearance to Soviet policy, Moscow has laid increasing stress on disarmament moves. The most significant factors underlying this development appear to have been: (1) a growing awareness of the destructiveness of nuclear weapons and a consequent

desire to reduce the likelihood of nuclear war; (2) a growing belief that less aggressive behavior would be more likely to undermine free world unity and resistance to Soviet policies; (3) a growing confidence that the Soviet Union will ultimately outstrip its principal opponent, the US, without recourse to war; and (4) a belief that in a situation of generally lessened tension significant economic resources could be diverted from purely military to other important uses.

## A. Reducing the Risks of Nuclear War

8. There is little doubt as to the serious concern with which the post-Stalin generation of Soviet leaders have come to view the consequences of a nuclear war. Though Malenkov's assertion in March 1954 that another world war would mean "the end of world civilization" (not just the collapse of capitalism) was repudiated, recent statements by the Soviet leaders suggest that they are well aware that widespread mutual devastation would ensue. The USSR's post-Stalin shift in emphasis from expansion by local aggression to peaceful coexistence tactics probably reflects at least in part this concern over the risks of nuclear war.

9. An important element in the Soviet desire to reduce the likelihood of nuclear war is the apparently growing confidence of the present Soviet leaders that the USSR will within a finite period outstrip the US in a "peaceful" competition for influence and power. This confidence rests upon the rapid growth of Soviet power and the spread of Soviet influence abroad, and upon successes in the fields of science and technology. It is further reinforced by the doctrine that Communist victory is historically inevitable and by the Soviet leaders' belief that they have the will and capacity to realize this goal. This present mood of confidence makes them all the more reluctant to see this prospect jeopardized by the one development which could spell immediate disaster — thermonuclear war.

10. At the same time we do not mean to suggest that Soviet conduct is shaped by an overriding fear that nuclear war is likely. On the contrary, the Soviet leaders probably believe that the West is not disposed to undertake such a war, and that even if it were, their own nuclear capabilities have already become such that the Western powers are highly unlikely to take the risk for any but the gravest reasons. They are probably also reasonably confident that they can conduct their own policy in such a way as to limit the risks involved.

11. Nevertheless, they must be disturbed over the possibility of war by miscalculation, perhaps arising out of local conflict, or even by accident. Among other things, they are concerned that the West would use nuclear weapons in local war, with the resultant danger of expanded hostilities. Perhaps for this reason published Soviet statements deny any distinction between the consequences of tactical and strategic use of nuclear weapons, and assert that any use of nuclear weapons in a limited war is bound to broaden the conflict. These statements may or may not represent the true Soviet belief; in either case they are probably designed to inhibit us from such use of nuclear weapons.

12. The Soviet leaders are probably also concerned that the advent of advanced delivery systems, and the consequent pressure for an ever higher state of readiness on both sides, will increase the danger of accident or miscalculation. While their recent complaints about SAC bomber flights were largely for propaganda purposes, we regard them as at least partly reflecting genuine concern. Finally, the Soviet view of the West is such that they cannot rule out the chance of a desperate Western effort to reverse "the tide of history" by attacking the USSR.

13. Hence we see such security concerns as being an important factor underlying the Soviet attitude toward disarmament. The Soviets probably consider that, because of mounting worldwide anxiety over the dangers of nuclear holocaust, and the resultant pressures for disarmament, the disarmament issue offers valuable potentialities for reducing the likelihood of nuclear war, above all by inhibiting the use of Western nuclear weapons and by helping to induce their withdrawal from around the periphery of the Bloc.

## B. Promoting the Strategy of Peaceful Competition

14. While the Soviet leaders cannot consider the subject of disarmament without reference to the foregoing security concerns, they at the same time look upon the issues as an integral and effective element of an aggressive foreign policy designed to expand Soviet influence and power by "peaceful competition." Indeed, these two aspects of the subject are inseparably related in Soviet political strategy. For example, by playing on popular anxieties regarding nuclear weapons, Moscow seeks to impede US plans to deploy these weapons overseas; by calling for the liquidation of foreign bases, it hopes to make US tenure of such bases difficult; by stressing the dangers incurred by countries in which US forces and nuclear weapons are stationed, it hopes to undermine the unity of Western alliances; by simultaneously declaring itself willing to settle outstanding problems and interested only in peaceful competition, it hopes to undercut the rationale of Western military preparedness. To the extent that these aims can be achieved, Western will and ability to respond to Soviet pressures are reduced and Moscow's freedom of maneuver vis-a-vis the West increased. Recognizing the likelihood of recurrent crises in the course of the East-West conflict, the Soviet leaders desire to undermine as much as possible Western power to react.

15. The mere agitation of these issues serves Soviet foreign policy objectives, regardless of the extent of progress toward a disarmament agreement, or even toward formal negotiations for one. The image of a peace-loving and constructive USSR is projected, and contrasted with that of a bellicose and intransigent US. Through this projection, the USSR hopes to gain in respectability and influence. Moreover, if the West could be persuaded to negotiate on Soviet terms, the resultant atmosphere of *détente* would, in parliamentary countries, make the maintenance of an adequate military posture difficult, possibly leading, in effect, to some degree of unilateral Western disarmament without compensatory Soviet concessions or effective safeguards.

16. The Soviet leaders may hope that the maintenance of psychological pressures for disarmament will eventually force Western governments to negotiate some kinds of disarmament agreements with them. They probably estimate that almost any disarmament agreement would tend to reduce international tensions, and thus reduce the effectiveness and cohesion of Western resistance to Soviet aggrandizement. Again, it is likely that Moscow hopes that some sort of European regional disarmament measure would initiate a course of events leading toward dissolution of NATO and the exclusion of US military power from the continent of Europe. Thus through the political as well as the directly military effects of a disarmament agreement the Soviet leaders might expect to improve their international position and to increase their freedom of maneuver vis-a-vis the West.

## C. Soviet View of the Military Balance of Power

17. Another key factor in the Soviet attitude is their view of the potential effect of disarmament measures on the balance of military power between the Bloc and the West. The Soviets could calculate that the elimination of nuclear weapons on both sides would be greatly to their advantage, being confident that they would retain a preponderance in conventional military strength. But we believe that the Soviets realize that this objective is realistically unobtainable, and that, whatever progress they can make toward reducing Western nuclear deterrent power or inhibiting its use, they must still calculate on a major Western nuclear capability for the foreseeable future. For this reason, among others, we conclude that the USSR will remain determined to retain and improve its own nuclear capability.

18. However, the Soviets probably estimate that the time has either already arrived, or will shortly, when neither side will be able to attack the other without receiving unacceptable damage in return. They may also regard it as unlikely that this state of affairs will be basically modified (except possibly through unforeseen technological breakthrough), de-

spite a continued buildup in more advanced armaments on both sides. While they are seeking to develop a major intercontinental missile capability before the US does, we do not believe they can realistically count on being able to achieve a decisive superiority in overall strategic delivery capability. On the other hand, as we have already suggested, they may regard the advent of advanced weapons systems as increasing the danger of war by miscalculation.[3]

19. Under these circumstances the Soviet leaders may not see any overriding military objection to certain forms or kinds of arms limitations so long as these would not compromise the deterrent posture, both nuclear and non-nuclear, which they deem necessary, nor the continued development of the military capabilities which they are determined to pursue. Indeed, because of their concern over the possibility of war by miscalculation and of their confidence in their current politico-economic strategy, they might see considerable value in entering negotiations with respect to the stabilization of the nuclear balance of power at a certain level, if this were technically possible.

20. In this connection, our estimates of Soviet nuclear capabilities [4] do not indicate that the Soviet nuclear stockpile is yet at a level which the Soviets would be likely to regard as adequate — although we cannot entirely dismiss Khrushchev's recent suggestions that the USSR may be approaching "nuclear sufficiency." Our evidence on Soviet nuclear tests indicates that the USSR probably has developed a sufficient variety of nuclear weapons types to satisfy most of its major military needs. While sufficient numbers of weapons to support a major strategic attack probably exist, current stockpiles of fissionable material are believed insufficient for wide-scale air defense and tactical as well as strategic uses. Moreover, fissionable material production facilities are currently being expanded. Accordingly, we think it unlikely that the Soviets would wish to stabilize their nuclear weapons or fissionable materials stockpile at its present level. In the course of the next few years, however, the stockpile may have increased to a point at which the Soviets will consider stabilizing it by an agreement with the West.

## D. Internal Political and Economic Factors

21. While the economic burden of the Soviet military establishment does not appear so great as to exert compelling pressure for arms reduction, the Soviet leaders may well see more profitable uses for some of the resources now devoted to military purposes, provided that Soviet security would not be impaired. The allocation of production, research, and manpower resources to military use necessarily curtails economic growth and competes with consumer goods expansion and availabilities for foreign trade and aid. Moreover,

[3] The Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, USAF, believes that the Soviets' apparent intention to develop an overpowering military capability — and the potentialities they must perceive for the success of their efforts — make the above paragraph unacceptable. While the statement, "they may also regard it as unlikely that this state of affairs will be basically modified . . .," is manifestly not a statement of probability, as it is employed in the development of the paragraph it strongly suggests or implies probability. To this implication the Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, USAF, dissents. Moreover, he does not agree that the Soviets cannot realistically "count on being able to achieve a decisive superiority in overall strategic delivery capability." Soviet advances in the field of nuclear weapons and advanced delivery systems strongly indicate that the Soviets intend to build up their military capabilities as rapidly as possible and the Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, USAF, has been unable to perceive any indication that the Soviets believe their objective of achieving decisive superiority is unattainable. Accordingly, he believes that paragraph 18 should read as follows:

"Within this general context, the Soviets probably estimate that within the near future and for a comparatively short time thereafter neither side will be able to attack the other without receiving unacceptable damage in return. They probably regard it as likely that this impending state of affairs *can* be basically modified in their favor through an accelerated buildup in more advanced weapons systems."

[4] NIE 11-2-58, *The Soviet Atomic Energy Program*, 14 January 1958.

the Soviet leaders, in view of their numerous other requirements for economic resources, cannot but be concerned over the growing cost and complexity of modern weapons systems. In this respect they face the same problems as do their counterparts in the West. Finally, if the Soviets believe their own doctrine that the capitalist economies of the Western states are artificially buoyed up by armaments production, they may believe that arms reduction could hasten the ultimate economic collapse of the capitalist world, at the same time as it assisted in Communist economic growth.

22. We do not believe that there are any compelling domestic political pressures underlying the Soviet position on disarmament. While the Soviet people undoubtedly share the worldwide fear of nuclear conflict, public opinion on this issue can hardly be considered a major operative force on leadership attitudes. Of more significance may be divergent views within the leadership itself, to which we shall refer later.

## E. The Fourth Country Problem[5]

23. Although we believe that the Soviets are concerned over the Fourth Country problem, we do not consider that it plays a major role in Soviet calculations except insofar as West Germany and possibly Communist China are concerned. The repeated demonstrations of Soviet hyper-sensitivity over revival of a German threat lead us to give much credence to their expressed concern over Bonn's acquiring nuclear weapons. While the problem of Communist China is not as immediate, we estimate that Soviet failure to date to provide their Chinese partners with nuclear weapons probably betokens some fear lest this development increase the likelihood of Chinese adventurism, with all the risks involved. Aside from these cases, the Soviets have shown far less concern over the risks that fourth countries possessing nuclear weapons might trigger off a nuclear war than over the risks inherent in the US-Soviet nuclear confrontation. Indeed we suspect that their hints of interest in this issue are based at least in part on their belief that we ourselves are much concerned.

[5] For a discussion of the "fourth country" problem, see the forthcoming NIE 100-2-58, *Development of Nuclear Capabilities by Fourth Countries.*

## II. RESTRAINING FACTORS IN THE SOVIET ATTITUDE

24. In sum, then, several powerful motivations underlie the USSR's increasing stress on disarmament issues over the last few years. But several other factors remain to be assessed before we can address ourselves to the key questions — how far do the Soviets desire to go in reaching agreement on specific disarmament measures, as opposed to unilateral actions and propaganda exploitation of the issue? — what risks as well as advantages do they see in such agreed measures? — and finally, what price are they willing to pay? Among these factors are the caution of the leaders, their acute fear of weakening the relative Soviet power position, their strong suspicion of the West, their aversion to inspection, and their probable belief that they can still gain considerably by propaganda and unilateral actions at little cost to themselves — all of which add to the difficulty of reaching agreements on any basis acceptable to the West.

25. Having so recently obtained what they probably regard as a substantial nuclear posture, the Soviets are almost certainly highly reluctant to risk compromising it by moving too far too fast in an untried and highly speculative field. We believe that they are feeling their way in an area where the ultimate implications of decisions are highly uncertain.

26. Powerfully reinforcing this attitude of caution is a deeply ingrained suspicion of the disarmament position taken by the West. Khrushchev himself has alleged that our proposals are designed to enhance our own military position while weakening that of the USSR. In short, the Soviet leadership apparently does not believe that we are interested in reaching agreements on arms limitations on the basis of what they believe to be the actual balance of power. In part, of course, they simply do not view the merits of our proposals in the same light as we do. (See Appendix). In some cases where they have partially accepted our proposals, they claim

that our subsequent withdrawal of them indicates a lack of serious intent. Closely related to the above two points is a probable Soviet belief that the West would interpret any signs of Soviet willingness to compromise as indicating overeagerness to reach agreement and would press for further concessions from the USSR.

27. One of the most important obstacles to agreement is the USSR's basic aversion to extensive inspection within its frontiers. We do not believe that an intention to evade the terms of an agreement is the chief reason for Soviet aversion to inspection, although this motive cannot be ignored. Rather we regard the chief factors to be their genuine fear of espionage, their deeply ingrained security consciousness, and their conviction that secrecy is an asset. Since they probably regard themselves as far better informed on our military situation than we are on theirs, they must look upon many forms of inspection as benefitting us far more than them. This is suggested by their denunciations of our inspection proposals as gigantic intelligence gathering schemes. In addition, they have reservations as to the effectiveness of inspection procedures in assuring that commitments are being observed. Finally, the Soviet leaders probably also fear the disturbing effects on a tightly controlled society which might result from the presence of foreign inspectors within the USSR.

28. However, the USSR has always expressed willingness to consider certain forms of ground inspection, although stressing arrangements which would minimize contacts with the population. We believe, moreover, that their sensitivity on this issue might diminish somewhat with time. We note, for example, the increased Soviet flexibility on tourist travel and exchanges, the opening of areas hitherto closed to foreign visitors, more open publications, and the like. These straws in the wind suggest at least that Soviet fear of ideological contamination is decreasing, and that their earlier fear of letting outsiders see their poverty is giving way to pride in showing off their accomplishments. The prospective advent of reconnaissance satellites may also cause reconsideration of Soviet views on inspection.[6]

29. Another restraining factor in the Soviet conduct of negotiations is their probable view that they can still gain considerably by propaganda and other forms of pressure, at little cost to themselves. Underlying this is their belief that over a period of time Western public opinion may force at least some Western governments to cut back their military establishments as well as to soften their positions on arms limitations, without corresponding Soviet concessions. They probably also expect that further exploitable fissures will develop among the Western powers.

## III. THE SOVIET POSITION ON DISARMAMENT

30. We doubt that the Soviet leadership, in balancing off the various factors discussed above, has as yet arrived at any hard and fast position on the disarmament issue. Indeed we would be surprised if there were not certain differences in point of view among the top leadership groups themselves. In this respect, it is difficult to separate the disarmament issue from the general post-Stalin strategy of "peaceful competition," of which Soviet disarmament policy forms an integral part. More doctrinaire elements may fear that this entire approach endangers the maintenance of revolutionary *élan* and the fabric of Soviet control in the Satellites and is ultimately incompatible with the degree of tension and vigilance required to justify the Party's dictatorship in the USSR. These groups, probably reinforced by most of the military, may be particularly sceptical of the benefits to be derived from disarmament moves and fearful of the risks which inspection would involve.

31. To date Soviet disarmament policy seems dominated by such an attitude of caution, by acute suspicion of Western motives, and by the feeling that the vulnerability of the Western position can continue to be exploited at minimum cost to the Soviets themselves. The principal tactics involved are broadly those of propaganda, though ostensible and in some cases actual willingness to negotiate is also

[6] See the forthcoming NIE 100-6-58, *Implications of Certain US Satellite Programs.*

involved. These tactics are typified by the vagueness and superficial attractiveness of Soviet proposals, most of which seem designed more for propaganda purposes than to lead to agreement. We are also struck by the "unilateralism" of such steps as the announcements of force reductions and nuclear test suspension, which seem designed as much to create pressures on the West through dramatic initiatives as to lead to negotiated agreements.

32. As to negotiations, the Soviets probably believe that the West is not yet ready to agree to arms limitations on any basis which seems equitable to the USSR. They see the US as not yet having reconciled itself to the Bloc's enhanced power position, which the Soviets insist must be recognized. For their own part, believing that time is working in their favor, they may see advantages in postponing serious negotiations on broad disarmament issues — as distinguished from essentially marginal issues like test suspension — until their position is further strengthened, especially through the advent of a substantial ICBM capability. Moreover, they may expect that the Western position will be further eroded by this time.

33. However, on certain limited issues the Kremlin is actively seeking to conclude agreements in order to lend verisimilitude to its position and place further pressure on the Western governments' position, among other more specific advantages. In this category we place a nuclear test moratorium, a "nuclear-free" zone in Europe, and troop reductions in Central Europe, all of which we discuss in detail in the Appendix. Moreover, the Soviets appear willing to pay a certain price for these agreements; in all three cases, for example, they are probably willing to accept some degree of inspection.

34. While this may be as far as the USSR is currently willing to go in actual controlled arms agreements, it does not necessarily represent the ultimate extent of Soviet willingness to negotiate seriously, particularly as time goes on. We regard the USSR's disarmament policy as still in transition, a view supported by the flexibility shown since 1955. The most recent indications are the USSR's announcement of nuclear test suspension and its willingness to open technical negotiations on policing a test ban. Even Moscow's complaint about SAC flights, while clearly motivated by propaganda considerations, is probably symptomatic of its growing concern over the risks of nuclear conflict, although its handling of this particular issue did not suggest sufficient uneasiness to impel the USSR to enter meaningful negotiations on it.

35. Of course, a great deal will depend on how much the USSR can accomplish by its present tactics in achieving a largely unilateral weakening of the West. To the extent that these tactics tend to inhibit the use and deployment of nuclear weapons, and to create strong pressures for US withdrawal — and provided the Soviets do not become more concerned over the risks of miscalculation — Moscow may see little gain in modifying its present position on disarmament, except in a tactical sense.

36. But if the West's deterrent power is maintained and strengthened and the Soviets see only minimal possibilities of unilaterally weakening us, there may be some further change in the Soviet position. As time passes, the various motivations already discussed may exert greater influence to this end. The Soviet leaders will almost certainly become more concerned over the prospective continued piling up of advanced nuclear armaments, with the heightened dangers of war by miscalculation. They will almost certainly become increasingly disturbed over US IRBM deployments, the advent of the Polaris system, and US acquisition of first and then second generation ICBMs. If at the same time they remain confident that they can achieve their objectives by "peaceful competition," the desirability of diminishing the likelihood of general war by disarmament agreements may loom larger in their minds. In fact they would probably look upon progress toward certain disarmament measures as facilitating the peaceful competition strategy itself. For these reasons the Soviets might become willing to pay a higher price to obtain disarmament agreements than they have heretofore been willing to pay.

37. We see two independent factors which could contribute to eventual increased Soviet willingness to reach disarmament agreements. First, the Soviets may come around more to the point of view that the West is really interested in some arms limitations on terms which would be regarded as equitable by the USSR. Second, as we have already suggested, there might be some diminution in Moscow's traditional aversion to the presence of foreign inspectors on Soviet soil.

38. Thus we see some possibility of a growing Soviet interest in expanding the area of serious disarmament negotiations with the West. We cannot predict when or on what issues this might occur. By and large we expect that Soviet caution and suspicion on such risk-impregnated issues will die slowly, if at all, and that any change will be gradual. We also foresee a variety of factors which might cause Soviet policy to move back and forth from time to time. For example, such shifts might be forced by differences among the Soviet leaders, by problems in the Satellites, by reversion to a tough line for internal reasons, or perhaps by fear the West is interpreting willingness to negotiate as a sign of weakness. We can also expect the traditional hard Soviet bargaining tactics, including great reluctance to show their hand prior to much probing of our position. At the same time, there is a good chance of further dramatic unilateral moves, particularly while Khrushchev is at the helm.

39. In any event, we can estimate with some confidence the limits beyond which, in the foreseeable future, Soviet policy will not go. They will be very careful not to give more than they get. They will not allow inspection except within limits which are carefully circumscribed. Third, and most important, the basic Soviet view of Western hostility will impel the Soviet leaders to retain at least sufficient military deterrent power to meet what they regard as their minimum security needs. Indeed, we believe that the USSR will enter any disarmament agreement with the intent at the same time to seek constantly to enhance its military capabilities and to achieve an eventual military superiority over the US.

# APPENDIX

## SOVIET VIEWS ON MAJOR DISARMAMENT ISSUES

### A. Control and Limitation of Mass Destruction Weapons

1. The Soviets almost certainly regard Western nuclear strength as the chief threat to their security and as a major obstacle to achievement of their external aims. Thus to them the key disarmament problem is that posed by nuclear weapons. Aside from developing their own nuclear power, the Soviets are seeking to meet this problem by an intensive propaganda campaign and a series of disarmament proposals, both designed to keep the nuclear weapons issue in the forefront of negotiations. The goal is to create a climate of concern over the dangers created by nuclear weapons, to underline the USSR's initiative in seeking to do something about this problem, and to inhibit the use of such weapons by the West.

2. *Cessation of Nuclear Tests.* The USSR's recently announced suspension of nuclear tests is intended to focus pressure on the West for a similar halt, as part of its broad campaign to stigmatize nuclear weapons and inhibit their use. Widespread anxieties over the effect of continued tests and growing Western popular pressures to stop testing made this issue readily exploitable. The Soviets maximized this pressure by timing their announcement to precede a long planned US test series; the timing was also arranged to follow their own intensive test series.

3. While the Soviets have left themselves free to resume testing at any time, we believe that they are actually seeking an agreed test moratorium with minimum controls. Their desire to put pressure on the US to accept cessation on these terms largely accounts for the unilateral nature of their move. They probably expect that the US and the UK will now be compelled to negotiate a moratorium. Although their test program is not yet as far advanced as ours (and technical motivations exist for further testing), they probably felt that their present test achievements had placed them in a sufficiently good military posture that the need for testing was outweighed by the positive factors mentioned above. Moreover, Moscow was probably motivated by a desire to impede future US testing of improved missile warheads, including one for the anti-ICBM missile, judging this advantage would outweigh gains from their own future tests. A desire to forestall "fourth country" nuclear weapons development probably also played some part.

4. Moscow has agreed in principle to controls, but there are numerous indications that it will seek to minimize the need for them. We believe that the USSR would accept a small number of fixed inspection sites, perhaps with some provision for limited mobility of inspectors. By emphasizing the ease with which a test ban can be monitored, it is seeking to create the impression that this limited system will suffice to detect evasions, and thereby to undercut any Western insistence on more elaborate inspection. If the West were to insist on a more elaborate system, the Kremlin would probably condemn this as demonstrating lack of good faith and as an intelligence-gathering scheme. It would probably let negotiations rupture on this issue, calculating that the blame for the deadlock would attach primarily to the West.

5. Assuming an agreed test moratorium, the Soviets would be unlikely to attempt to evade it, at least for some time.[1] With the completion of their recent intensive test series, they must be reasonably satisfied with the position they have reached. Moreover, they would have to balance the risks of detection against the obvious value they have seen in a test ban. We have already estimated that the Soviet leaders would almost certainly regard the political consequences of getting caught red-handed as unacceptable, except in such extraordinary circumstances as a clear opportunity to gain a great advantage over the US or, conversely, if the US had gained a clear advantage over the USSR. In such cases we regard denunciation of the test ban as more likely than attempted evasion.

6. *Ban on Use of Nuclear Weapons.* The long-standing Soviet campaign to obtain a ban on use of nuclear weapons originated as a defensive ploy to counter the US monopoly and later great superiority in such weapons. The theme is still being actively employed by the Soviets, and probably would be pushed even harder following agreement on a test suspension. However, it must be clear to them that Western agreement to prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons almost certainly cannot be obtained in any event. Hence, the Soviets may press for a more limited agreement or even unilateral declarations that nuclear weapons not be used "first," but only, if at all, in retaliation for an aggressor's prior use of nuclear weapons.

7. The Soviets have also strongly condemned any attempts to distinguish between the consequences of "strategic" and "tactical" employment of nuclear weapons, primarily because they want to inhibit us from concluding that we can be free to use nuclear weapons in less than total war. This stand does not preclude the Soviets from later admitting such distinctions in practice, but — as they intend — it leaves their reaction in doubt.

8. *Nuclear Production Cessation and Reduction of Stockpiles.* A key question in estimating Soviet views on ceasing production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes and on reducing existing stockpiles is their view of what constitutes nuclear sufficiency. While we cannot ascertain the Soviet estimate of their stockpile requirements, we know that they are expanding their fissionable materials production. It is true that certain remarks made by Khrushchev in March indicated his belief that the Soviets were approaching, and may have already reached, sufficiency in nuclear weapons stockpiles; however, more recently he indicated that this judgment applied only to large-yield weapons.

9. Although the USSR might enter negotiations on cessation of weapons material production, we do not believe that it would either unilaterally cease such production or agree to mutual cessation until its minimum stockpile requirements had been met. Moreover, the Soviet view as to how much inspection should be permitted under any agreement would almost certainly be far less extensive than our own. Evasion might depend in part upon their knowledge of our intelligence on all production facilities, but the Soviets would probably consider it unnecessary to run the risk of detection if they had already assured their minimum requirements.

10. The Soviets might agree to mutual reduction of stockpiles so long as their relative power position vis-a-vis the US was at no stage impaired by reductions of their own stockpile below a minimum deterrent capability.

11. *Control of Other Weapons of Mass Destruction.* The Soviets consistently treat these weapons (including "radiological weapons" as distinguished from nuclear explosive weapons) as "weapons of mass destruction" which should be banned along with nuclear weapons. However, they appear to regard the problem as much less important than that of controlling nuclear explosive weapons.

## B. Control over Advanced Delivery Systems

12. Khrushchev has made clear that the USSR regards the US proposals on control of outer space vehicles as an attempt to limit

[1] See NIE 11-7-57, *Feasibility and Likelihood of Attempted Soviet Evasion of a Nuclear Test Moratorium,* 10 December 1957.

the USSR's advantage in the field of rocketry and to preserve the geographic advantage which its peripheral base structure gives to the US. Hence he has countered by proposing that control of outer space and withdrawal from overseas bases must be closely linked. In Soviet eyes their achievement of an ICBM capability will greatly enhance their military position vis-a-vis the US by drastically reducing the US geographical advantage. So long as even a substantial portion of US striking power is dependent on overseas bases, we believe that the USSR will insist on linking the two issues.

13. In the more distant future, when the primary strategic strike capabilities of both sides have become truly intercontinental in nature, the Soviet calculation of the relative advantages and disadvantages of agreed controls and inspection might tend to shift. An additional factor would be the risks of miscalculation involved in the almost instantaneous readiness of second generation missiles. However, we are almost certain that they would still insist on considering all forms of strategic striking power simultaneously, including manned aircraft and naval vessels as well as missiles. Even in this case, the problem of international supervision would remain a powerful inhibitory factor in Soviet thinking. They would recognize that an extremely elaborate inspection apparatus would be required, on a world-wide basis. However, the development of reconnaissance satellites might affect their view of this problem.

## C. Prevention of Surprise Attack by Inspection

14. For a period in 1954–55, Soviet statements appeared to indicate a mounting awareness of Soviet vulnerability to surprise attack, which may explain the inclusion in the Soviet proposals of May 10, 1955 of a ground warning system for this purpose. The subject has been included in most subsequent Soviet disarmament and Summit conference proposals, but always in quite vague terms. It may be that the Soviets have included this item to give an appearance of receptivity in view of the obvious US interest in it. They probably consider that they have less need for such safeguards than the West, because of the openness of Western society and the political limitations upon Western ability to launch a surprise attack; nevertheless we believe they are also somewhat concerned.

15. The Soviets have obviously regarded our proposals on various zones of inspection — including the Arctic Zone — as designed to maximize our own advantage. Similarly their own proposal for an 800 km. inspection zone on each side of the East-West line in Europe seemed designed to maximize their advantage. We are unable to say what the USSR would regard as equitable zonal boundaries, but we believe that there may be some flexibility in their position on this score.

16. However, another obstacle to Soviet acceptance of various inspection zones, particularly any including Soviet territory, lies in their aversion to inspection, which we have previously discussed. Beyond this, they do not seem persuaded of the efficacy of inspection in preventing strategic surprise. Soviet spokesmen, including Khrushchev, have in recent months reaffirmed their view that even the most complex inspection system could not, because of the vast areas and great variety of weapons involved, rule out violations or give warning of an attack deliberately and secretly prepared. Thus, the Soviets probably view adequate safeguards as involving an extremely elaborate inspection system, one even then of doubtful effectiveness, and one which by its very nature would most completely expose them to Western inspectors and controls.

17. Nonetheless, there may be a gradual shift in the Soviet attitude toward measures to prevent surprise attack, particularly if their concern over the risks of war by miscalculation mounts. It is perhaps significant that the Soviets already appear prepared to accept a greater degree of inspection in Eastern Europe (in connection with their disengagement proposals) than in the USSR. But at best we believe that their initial approach to any inspection scheme would be grudging and extremely cautious, and confined to an area where they felt they would be only minimally exposed.

## D. Limitations on Manpower and Conventional Arms

18. At least in their negotiating position, the Soviets have shown themselves rather flexible on manpower strengths and conventional force cuts. They are doubtless aware of the much greater combat force which they have shown themselves able to field from an equivalent force level. Of the various force levels of 1.5, 1.7, 2.1, or 2.5 million men, they have favored the lower limit probably in order to induce a maximum reduction of Western strength in forward areas, including abandonment of some overseas bases, and also to gain the maximum from manpower and cost reduction for domestic economic expansion and aid and trade abroad. We believe that Moscow would probably consider seriously an offer of considerable manpower reductions if it were not tied to political and other conditions and if only modest controls were involved.

19. Limitations on conventional arms have not been stressed in Soviet proposals or propaganda for some time, although Moscow has made occasional references to their desirability. The Soviets probably feel that the West has more to gain than they from such reductions.

20. The USSR has frequently called for a freeze on or a percentage reduction in arms outlays, probably largely for propaganda reasons. By playing on Free World popular dissatisfaction with burdensome taxation, it may expect to add to the political difficulties of Western governments. Here too, Soviet reluctance to permit effective inspection would be a major bar. The Kremlin would doubtless be reluctant to reveal the extent to which past budgets have concealed military expenditures.

## E. Disengagement

21. The Soviets apparently see distinct advantages in certain forms of disengagement — primarily in Europe — which would hasten the retraction of US power from this key area. They are prepared to pay some price for what they probably regard as more than compensatory gains. In this connection we regard their concern over the situation in Eastern Europe, and their resultant desire to minimize the risks of Western intervention in event of another Satellite explosion, as an important motive. Beyond this, they are all too well aware of the potential impact on Western Europe of the withdrawal of US deterrent power or even the nuclear component thereof. Finally, the threat posed by a nuclear-armed West Germany undoubtedly weighs heavily on Soviet minds, and probably has considerable impact on their desire to prevent West German acquisition of nuclear arms and delivery systems, particularly IRBMs.

22. We do not believe the USSR or Poland expected acceptance of the Rapacki plan for barring nuclear weapons from Central Europe. While Polish motives were reportedly somewhat different, Moscow probably saw in the the proposal an additional lever for generating opposition to the NATO nuclear deterrent program and a useful gambit for Summit discussion. Nevertheless, the scheme has such advantages from the Soviet standpoint that they would probably be prepared to implement it and to accept a good deal in the way of inspection. Among other things, Moscow would see in an agreed nuclear-free zone in Central Europe a compelling precedent for Western acceptance of further measures along these lines.

23. We believe that a mutually agreed thinning out of conventional forces in Europe would hold considerable attractions for the USSR. They would probably expect it to impair the NATO shield without correspondingly weakening the Soviet position, to start a trend toward US withdrawal, and to reduce the likelihood of Western intervention in any Satellite revolt. We doubt, however, that Moscow would agree to a mutual withdrawal of all US and Soviet forces from foreign soil in Europe, despite the many advantages involved. In our view the USSR will retain a sufficient military presence in key areas of Eastern Europe to minimize the risks of Satellite uprisings and underline Soviet determination to intervene in that event, as well as to maintain the military threat created by their present forward position in Europe.

24. Inspection would again be regarded as undesirable under either of the above alternatives, but the Soviets have shown willingness to make concessions in this respect. Though regarding the presence of Western inspectors in the Satellites as a likely stimulus to popular dissidence and as a complicating factor in event of another uprising, Moscow probably believes that these inspectors can be sufficiently insulated from the local populace to make these risks manageable.