

## **Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty/SALT, 1978, 4/78**

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Chief of Staff (Jordan) / ~~Box 6 of 2 (copy)~~ / Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty--Salt (78)  
*Confidential File*

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RELATIONSHIP OF SALT II TO CTB

*... come before ...*

*1/11/79*

You suggested at one of our recent breakfast meetings that SALT II and CTB were of equal importance to you as President and that you planned to send them up to the Congress together. I would like to argue both points.

*not true  
SALT more  
imp.*

Politically and substantively, SALT II is the most important issue you will deal with as President. SALT has come to represent in this country and around the world the ability of the American President to effectively manage the U.S. - Soviet relationship. Politically, it will be the greatest and toughest fight of your Presidency. If we ratify a SALT II Agreement in 1979, and the economy is in reasonably good shape, I believe that it will insure your re-election in 1980. If we are defeated on SALT II, I believe that it will destroy your ability to be an effective President and probably cost you re-election.

*not true  
They will be signed  
at some point*

"Electrostatic reproduction made for preservation purposes."

It is important to have CTB to give credibility to our nuclear non-proliferation efforts around the world. But substantively, and it is symbolically less important than SALT and politically it is a secondary issue with the American people.

I share your belief that the lab directors have greatly exaggerated the risks of a comprehensive test ban. But the substance of CTB is not my concern. It is my contention that to proceed at this point to make a final decision on CTB will have a significant and adverse impact on prospects of Congressional approval for SALT II.

The following are the arguments against making a final decision on CTB at this time:

1. Once you have made a decision on CTB, the public and political debate will begin. Cy argues that the debate in the Congress will not really begin until we send the treaty to the Hill. I respectfully disagree. Once you have made

your decision on CTB, it will be leaked to the press. Opponents of CTB and SALT as well as political opportunists of both parties will begin to attack your decision before the treaty is consummated. Senator Jackson will begin Congressional hearings and the political and public debate will begin right away.

2. Given the present mood of the country, there is little hope that the debate will be balanced or objective. Opponents of SALT will use CTB as a warm-up. It will be used as a partisan issue by the Republicans in the Fall elections to symbolize the allegation that the Carter Administration is not tough enough and is responsible for the erosion of U.S. military strength. The result will be that CTB will become the captive issue of both the current political mood and of the opponents of Jimmy Carter and SALT. The real loser in the debate will be the American people who will not hear a rational and balanced debate on the question of a test ban.

3. Our public substantive arguments in support of CTB  
are weaker than our public substantive arguments in  
favor of SALT. Consequently, it can be argued that we  
should lead with SALT followed by CTB. In SALT II, we  
will be able to point to tangible and real concessions  
made by the Soviet Union. In CTB, we will be adhering  
to an agreement that is very difficult to verify and that  
the American people will expect the Soviets to violate.  
The same recent survey that showed overwhelming public  
support for SALT also showed that 18% of the American  
people would not expect the Soviet Union to abide by the  
terms of the agreement. The deep suspicion that the  
American people have currently of the Soviet Union, coupled  
with the fact that the CTB will be difficult to verify,  
will make CTB vulnerable to political charges that can  
be refuted in the case of SALT.

*In not  
sure this  
is true*

4. On SALT II, the Administration will be united - on  
CTB, the Administration will be sharply divided. When we  
went to the Senate this year on tough foreign policy issues,  
we were greatly strengthened by the fact that State, Defense,

NSC and the Joint Chiefs publicly and privately supported our policies. As it presently stands, we will have the Joint Chiefs and the lab directors officially opposing our position and Jim Schlesinger's lukewarm support, which will be interpreted in the Congress as private opposition. It could not be a worse situation for us politically - the President versus the Joint Chiefs and the lab directors on the question of the reliability of our nuclear stockpile. It will make the media coverage of the neutron bomb controversy pale by comparison.

5. We need time to calm the American people down, to focus on our military strengths and correct the misimpression that has been created and does exist that the Soviets have gained some significant military advantage in the past few years. A protracted, highly publicized and controversial debate over the next several months which pits you against military and technical spokesmen of your own Administration will have the impact of only continuing and exacerbating the present mood.

Mr. President, five or ten years from now no one will care or remember whether we consummated CTB in the Fall of 1978 or the Spring of 1979. People will care and it will matter if we were successful in winning Congressional approval for CTB and SALT.

CTB is a natural follow-up to SALT II. I believe that our public and political posture on SALT is stronger than CTB. We have been doing the necessary groundwork in Congress and with the political community on SALT. We are not well prepared to begin the CTB debate now.

We need badly to have some time to change the present atmosphere in the country that is not favorable to SALT or CTB so that those debates can take place in fair and favorable circumstances.

In a recent meeting with Cy, Zbig and Harold, I posed the question, "Why the rush"? They responded that you were anxious to consummate the treaty (a good and legitimate reason) and that it would be helpful to Jim Callaghan

in the British elections. I doubt if Jim Callaghan would want us to proceed if he knew that we would be jeopardizing the chance of winning Congressional approval for both CTB and SALT.

I also asked if there were imminent decisions to be made by India or Brazil or other countries that would be adversely affected by a modest delay in CTB. The response was negative.

Consequently, it is a scheduling decision that you must make, and the overriding considerations in that decision should be what course and/or schedule would enhance Congressional approval for CTB and SALT. I feel strongly that SALT, followed by CTB, makes the most sense.

Harold Brown also thinks that with some time and tangible work on the issues of verification and safeguards he may be able to bring the Joint Chiefs along. If forced to make a decision and judgement now on CTB, their response will be negative. With time and work, he thinks he may

change them to a position of explicit acceptance,  
though not approval.

Mr. President, I don't usually make a request on a personal basis, but I feel as strongly about this as I have any decision you have made since coming to office. Before you decide to proceed with CTB, talk with members of Congress, Frank Moore and others whose opinions you respect. We have made a lot of decisions in the last eighteen months without regard to political circumstances and to Congressional sentiments. This is too important a decision to be made that same way.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

July 7, 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: JERRY RAFSHOON



After meeting with Hamilton, Zbig, Secretary Vance and Secretary Brown concerning the timing of CTB and SALT, I strongly endorse the position that we should not try to get approval on CTB until after SALT. Aside from the obvious concerns that I have regarding too much visibility on foreign affairs while the economy is so bad, I think that you are running a real risk in introducing to the public another discordant (and it will be discordant) element before SALT. It is going to be hard enough to do SALT in today's atmosphere. Preceding that with something more vulnerable and with which you will have divided voices in your administration will hurt us in trying to project you as someone in control of our own government. I share your desire to lessen the threat of nuclear destruction, but it must be done in a way that will be effective politically. There has been no dialogue on CTB and you are not prepared for the fight. (I am getting ready to work up a communications plan on the whole subject of SALT, CTB, and foreign policy in general.)

There are those who compare CTB with the Kennedy nuclear test ban but there are some differences: JFK's treaty came when there were real concerns about fallout and radiation poisoning, and it came after he had put the Russians in their place during the Cuban missile crisis. You don't have that going for you.

Please, Mr. President, we need some good, visible domestic victories before we solve the world's problems.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

July 7, 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Jody Powell *JPP*

I have read and agree with Hamilton's memo. If because of foreign policy considerations you feel that we must go forward on CTB now despite the handicaps, I'm sure we will all give it our best.

I must tell you, however, that I do not believe our best will be good enough. The odds are that we will lose and that we will also further damage our changes on SALT. This would be bad enough if the damage were limited to these two issues, but it will not be so limited.

Our greatest vulnerability is the perception that we cannot govern. We simply cannot afford failure on an issue this important lest this perception be set in concrete.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

July 7, 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM:

FRANK MOORE *F.M. Moore*

SUBJECT:

COMPREHENSIVE TEST BAN TREATY -  
CONGRESSIONAL IMPLICATIONS

We believe a decision by you to decide on final terms and to seek a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty this year will have a direct and adverse effect on successful Congressional action on both CTBT and SALT. Several factors contribute to this conclusion: (1) a CTBT submitted to the Senate before a SALT agreement will result in a premature and damaging debate on SALT; (2) the present anti-Soviet sentiment on the Hill and in the country makes the climate for approval of a CTBT very difficult; (3) potential conservative supporters of SALT may be lost as a result of a protracted debate on CTBT; (4) the JCS and elements of DOE oppose a CTBT; (5) SALT supporters will not want a debate on CTBT IF THEY BELIEVE IT WILL HAVE AN ADVERSE effect on SALT; and (6) a CTBT will be perceived as premature coming before a successful conclusion of SALT.

Staunch opponents of SALT will use a debate on CTBT to attack SALT. Already Dewey Bartlett has urged Scoop Jackson to hold hearings on CTBT with the express purpose of putting the JCS further on the record in opposition to CTBT. (Dave Jones is already on record opposing a restrictive CTBT). Opening the SALT debate early via a CTBT debate will preempt our efforts to educate the Congress thoroughly on the terms of SALT. Although we have been briefing on SALT for months we are handicapped in presenting our complete case due to the sensitivity of negotiations and several unresolved issues. This has given opponents of SALT complete freedom to attack the agreement in the absence of counter arguments from our side. A CTBT debate will aggravate this situation further by giving opponents a broad and exposed platform to attack SALT.

The strong anti-Soviet climate on the Hill makes it extremely difficult to debate rationally any agreement with the Soviets. It is critical to both CTBT and SALT that this climate improve before we begin any debate. Extensive consultations, good treaty terms, positive action by the Soviets, and time will help lessen the tension. An early debate on CTBT will only aggravate the present climate. Additionally CTBT, more than SALT, requires a certain amount of trust in the Soviets' willingness to comply with the Treaty terms. Even with strong verification measures, it will be very difficult to convince anyone on the Hill that the Russians, at least recently, are at all trustworthy. In order to pass a SALT agreement we must have the support of conservatives like Nunn, Stennis, and Hollings. To secure their support we must make a strong case that SALT is in the best national security interests of the U.S. To do this we must have a united Administration, particularly DOD and the JCS, strongly behind SALT. Opposition to a CTBT by the JCS exposes the agreement to charges of weakness and potentially detrimental to U.S. security interests. This may force Nunn, Stennis, et al, to join forces with Garn and McClure to defeat CTBT, forming an alliance which could, if continued post CTBT in an anti-Soviet posture, spell disaster for SALT. Additionally, failure to rally the JCS behind CTBT will raise questions about our ability to get their strong backing for SALT.

SALT supporters will not be inclined to take up the battle for CTBT if they believe such a debate will have an adverse effect on SALT. Our supporters have cautioned us that even under the best of circumstances SALT will be difficult. It is likely that they will see CTBT detrimental to SALT and will be hesitant to use any chips on CTBT at the expense of SALT. Supporters further argue that CTBT is premature without a SALT agreement and that it is a natural followup to SALT, not an opening salvo in the arms debate. The same arguments against a CTBT preceding SALT apply to a simultaneous submittal. Having both agreements before the Congress at the same time will result in conflicting debate, tradeoffs between the two, and split constituencies which could cost votes for both agreements. Our strong advice is to go slow on CTBT and submit a SALT agreement first. A successful resolution of SALT will enhance passage of CTBT. A divisive battle on CTBT before or during the SALT debate could have disastrous consequences for both.