

# The End of SALT? Purpose and Strategy in U.S.—U.S.S.R. Negotiations

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As a matter of historical record, arms control agreements tend, overwhelmingly, not to accomplish the ends specified at the time of their signing by the politicians and senior officials of democratic countries. Indeed, the record is so negative that the burden of justification has to lie upon those who would argue that 'this time it will be different'. In this article it is argued that arms control of a meaningful kind is possible, but that there is a need to clear the ground of myths and pious aspirations, so that the elements of an arms-control negotiating strategy that stand a reasonable prospect of success can be identified. This discussion relates specifically to SALT, but it is intended to have a much wider application.

## Purpose

In a recent article, a former Executive Secretary of the American SALT delegation, and long-standing distinguished Sovietologist, rendered the judgment that "the greatest problem of the American side in the SALT negotiations has been the absence of consensus on our own negotiating objectives."<sup>1</sup> Phrased more directly, the United States' defense community has lacked stable and intelligent guidance from higher political authority on what it was about in SALT. When a President and his most immediate advisors do not understand what can be accomplished through arms control, nor how best to seek accomplishment of their fluctuating objectives, naturally the great game of SALT policymaking in Washington is opened up to raids, coups, and subversion by all of the many bureaucratic and congressional actors who wish to play (and SALT involves sufficiently high and exciting stakes that everybody wants to play in the game).

Probably the most beneficial development for the long-term health of SALT (and of the Western security that should be

1. Raymond L. Garthoff, "Negotiating with the Russians: Some Lessons from SALT," *International Security*, Vol. 1, No. 4 (Spring 1977), p. 19.

served by SALT) would be the assumption of office by a President who felt no emotional commitment to arms control *per se*, and who would appoint to positions of high responsibility in the national security area, men of considerable intelligence and even greater judgment — blessed with an open-mindedness regarding the ways in which national security might best be promoted. Above all else, the President and his appointees should be skeptical of existing bureaucratic (and academic) wisdom, and should not be long-term adherents to one philosophy on these questions. The Carter Administration does not fit this model. Unlike Henry Kissinger, the new team believes (or believed) that real things could be accomplished through arms control mechanisms, of real security value, and also unlike Henry Kissinger the new team appeared not to appreciate that real accomplishment has to be paid for by means of investment in bargaining leverage. Kissinger may (and should) be faulted for trying to pass off insubstantial agreements as triumphs of inter-state diplomacy, but he hardly believes that virtue brings its own reward.

Bureaucracies are prisoners of yesterday's policy positions and, more generally, of the pressure of events. Even supposedly zero-based policy reviews founder in the bog of special contending agency interests. Bureaucrats do not seek truth, they are obliged to defend their marches. Both common sense and historical study tell us that a country can be either too weak or too strong to enter into negotiations with any prospect of 'success'. Indeed, if one is very much stronger than the potential adversary (and it is only between potential adversaries that arms control has any meaning), a firm determination to maintain that margin of strength is probably a better arms control device than any treaty. For officials, basic thought on 'what we are about' in SALT, for example, is a luxury that political deadlines tend not to afford. Hence in 1977, nearly eight years into the SALT exercise, even officials intimately involved in the negotiations tend to have only the most tentative and confused notion of what it is that they are charged with accomplishing. Is SALT about the promotion of detente — or is detente about the promotion of SALT (and what is detente)? — in which event, why is one seeking to promote SALT? Very generally, there is agreement that SALT is about an elusive quality termed *stability* — but authoritative political

guidance on what tends to add to, or detract from, stability is distinguished by its absence. It is not suggested here that there is a single correct answer to basic questions such as these, only that the American defense community seems never to have taken the time needed to address them. Almost literally scurrying from one round of the negotiations to the next, yesterday's framework of working policy capital tends to be dusted off and revised for presentation today.

Prominent among the less well-understood aspects of SALT is the issue of the duration of the exercise and the proper relations between the sequential phases. Is SALT a permanent, or semi-permanent diplomatic institution, with no prospective end-product? Or, is SALT to be approached as though a diplomatic *denouement* might be accomplished in SALT's 3 and 4? Is SALT really about the institutionalizing of a dialogue, punctuated by fairly *pro forma* 'registration-of-fact' agreements; or is SALT an endeavor to alter the future course of strategic (*et al.*) history?

The failure of SALT negotiations, thus far — nearly eight years in — to achieve agreements that had unambiguous merits for national and international security, requires some detailed explanation. It could be that very little can be accomplished directly through SALT; American leaders and officials have failed to arm themselves with the kind of bargaining leverage that might produce non-marginal and balanced agreements; or that the 'right package' of positive and negative incentives has failed to emerge from the policy mill. In the American case, the eight years of SALT show both intellectual and policy failure. Whether or not the United States has expected too much of SALT is a moot question, because the Soviet Union has yet to be confronted with a negotiating adversary that had *both* high expectations *and* a persuasive array of what, for want of a better term, are called 'bargaining chips'.<sup>2</sup>

### Substance or Cosmetics

The twists and turns of the Carter Administration on SALT policy reflect an ambivalence, or confusion of thought, that has permeated the entire SALT enterprise on the American side.

2. See Robert J. Bresler and Robert C. Gray, "The Bargaining Chip and SALT," *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 92, No. 1 (Spring 1977), pp. 65-88.

Two distinctions need to be drawn. First, there is a fairly clear division between those who believe that Soviet leaders genuinely favor a stabilization of the arms competition — no longer do those leaders need education in the subtleties of stability, although they do need some assistance to combat their domestic hawks; and those who believe that Soviet leaders have no inherent interest in arms control and the goals that Western commentators tend to assert that arms control should forward. In this second view, agreements can be achieved solely on the basis of a strict *quid pro quo*. Abstract arguments about stability will not move the Soviet leadership. What might move them are American weapon programs that promise to threaten Soviet strategic assets. Second, one may distinguish between those who believe that substantial measures of arms control are possible, and those who do not — largely for what should be termed ‘structural’ reasons. The first distinction has as its criterion one’s estimate of Soviet intentions; the second one’s assessment of the character of the total conflict-cooperation system that embraces the Superpowers. These distinctions sound, and indeed are, somewhat academic and artificial, but among the virtues of the academic and the artificial is that such an exercise in distinction-creation does compel an analyst to think through what it is that his subject is about, and compels him to address the possibility that there may be structural constraints certain or very likely to frustrate policy intentions. A well-meaning but rather loose-thinking arms control community has not, as yet, been obliged to ask of itself just what it was about.

With the Carter Administration, on present evidence, an unfortunate ambivalence is being enacted as policy. The Administration appears to believe that SALT is serious arms-control business and that many things are possible. For example, commenting upon the Moscow episode of late March, Zbigniew Brzezinski has said that:

What we were trying to accomplish and what we intend to accomplish is to move forward to genuine disarmament; that is to say, to obtain a significant reduction in the level of the strategic confrontation.

We believe that SALT agreements should not only set the framework for continued competition, but that they should indeed limit that competition, reduce its scope,

introduce greater stability into our relationship.<sup>3</sup>

Brzezinski's view is eminently defensible — provided strategic policy matches it in an enduring fashion. Unfortunately, Brzezinski and others clearly had no very sensitive appreciation of just what was needed on the American side in order to induce Soviet interest in "genuine disarmament." Moreover, true to the American SALT record of 1969-1976, the Carter Administration is providing more than a little public evidence to the effect that if it cannot reach an agreement which has real arms-control (let alone disarmament) merit, it will settle for whatever should prove to be negotiable (provided it looks tolerably well-balanced). This, of course, was the story of Henry Kissinger's 'triumph' at Vladivostok. The breakthrough to equal aggregates for strategic nuclear delivery vehicles and MIRV launchers was achieved at the cost of abandoning the previous pursuit of a severe constraint upon missile throw-weight.

A worthwhile SALT 2 treaty is not negotiable in 1977. But, some clear thought in 1977 could vastly improve the prospects for SALT in 1979 or 1980. Recognizing the ambiguities as to what 'SALT is about' that have been discussed above, President Carter could elect to match his disarmament hopes to a military program that would yield those hopes some prospect of success. However, the President should also recognize the possibility that many of his arms-control appointees may misunderstand the character of their tasks, and that "genuine disarmament" may be impossible — regardless of the scale and character of American weapon programs. Fortunately, the President can be spared any very painful choices, for the same American defense posture should yield both the leverage needed for worthwhile SALT agreements, and the defensive hedges required should the practicable bounds of SALT bargaining be restricted to the cosmetic.

SALT as a continuous diplomatic institution that cannot bring forth "genuine disarmament" should be perfectly acceptable, provided succeeding American Administrations ceased to take serious account of alleged SALT bargaining needs in the design of the strategic posture. Paradoxically, perhaps, such a

3. "Brzezinski Details Administration's Position," *Aviation Week and Space Technology*, Vol. 106, No. 16 (April 18, 1977), p. 34.

stable determination to ensure the internal and external integrity of the strategic posture (internal in that the separate parts made sense related one to the other; external in that the posture and doctrine spoke appropriately to the United States' unique foreign-policy needs) would, as a prediction, greatly enhance the prospects for the SALT process delivering agreements that could be defended as worthwhile measures of arms control.

### Strategy for Leverage

It is sensible to adopt an agnostic view of SALT's potential for arms-control accomplishment. What has tended to happen thus far on the American side is that too many people have believed that great things could be achieved without the credible promise (and potential performance) of great American effort, and those same people — when disabused of the fantasy that the Soviet Union would sign manifestly unequal agreements — have found little difficulty in advocating and defending terms which were to the American disfavor. The leading argument employed has been that SALT is really about the promotion of a whole network of Soviet-American relations, so the fine print of a SALT agreement really does not matter very much. That kind of thinking leads to 'arms control by promissory note': which is to say, 'you may not like SALT 1 (or 2, or 3), but SALT 2 (or 3, or 4) will be better; the Millennium cannot be accomplished by one treaty. It is a fundamental error to maintain that poor agreements somehow will pave the way for good, or at least better, agreements. As Raymond Garthoff has observed, much of the potential substance of the SALT 1 game was abandoned by the United States, in Kissinger-level back-channel diplomacy, so that the front-channel could not come to grips with some real, and critically important issues.<sup>4</sup> To be specific, as a consequence of Kissinger's back-channel diplomacy early in 1971, SALT 1, and prospectively SALT 2 and beyond, are (will be) constraining the wrong things — launcher *numbers*. This was a negotiating error of mammoth proportions and it is still with us. Even a novice in the business of strategic analysis can appreciate that there is safety (the magic quality, *stability*) in numbers provided missile throw-

4. "Negotiating with the Russians: Some Lessons from SALT," *op. cit.*, pp. 14-15.

weight/bomber payload is tightly limited. Why, then, is SALT not in the business of limiting throwweight? The simple answer is that the United States, in the person of Henry Kissinger, acquiesced (early in 1971) in the Soviet view that it was launcher numbers that should be limited.<sup>5</sup> As a consequence, there is a fair prospect that 1977-78 will see the emergence of an essentially worthless SALT 2 treaty.

The discussion above is intended to suggest that if one is serious about arms control, one should behave as though one were serious about arms control. A serious arms controller in the late 1970s would have to *insist* that future SALT regimes contain the quality rather than the quantity of weapons. Moreover, if one genuinely seeks strategic stability, a golden rule has to be that defense activities which markedly might reduce the vulnerability of strategic forces should not be constrained by treaty. This would mean that terminal ballistic missile defense of ICBM complexes and land-mobility for ICBMs should not be prohibited. At the present time, the chances seem to be better than even that the United States will repeat in SALT 2 an error committed in SALT 1. Just as SALT 1 prohibited ABM defense of more than a nominal capability, while failing to constrain the hard-target killing threat, so in SALT 2 the United States bids fair to trade away its land-mobile ICBM option, while failing to constrain the rapidly evolving threat to kill hard targets. (In a fit of excessive arms-control zeal, the United States went on public, though *unilateral*, record in 1972 with the claim that mobile ICBMs would be incompatible with its understanding of the SALT 1 regime.)<sup>6</sup>

For once, a circle can be squared. Those strongly skeptical of the potential accomplishments of SALT, and those of a far more hopeful mien, should be able to agree upon a negotiating

5. Numbers of launchers, not of missiles. It is not possible to verify missile numbers save through intrusive on-site inspection. The Soviet Union could well have 2-3 reloads for its 'cold launch' ICBMs and (eventually) for its new IRBM, the SS-20.

6. The most ill-advised aspect of current American SALT policy is the desire to attach some 'statement of agreed principles for the framework for a SALT 3 treaty' to a SALT 2 treaty. This invites the perpetuation of error and could provide the Soviet Union with arguments that might defeat later American efforts to accomplish worthwhile objectives through SALT 3. In 1977, one should not mortgage one's freedom of negotiating action in the early 1980s.

strategy and a basis for negotiation (in the form of United States strategic posture and doctrine) which meets all likely eventualities. This strategy may be expressed in positive or negative terms, according to taste and circumstance. Negatively, the United States would tell the Soviet Union (in the form of weapon programs and domestic and allied political support for those programs — which Soviet officials could comprehend with scant need for translation) that the quality of Soviet military security would be distinctly inferior in a SALTless, as opposed to a SALTed, world. It is possible that radical SALT notions, no matter how well supported by negative sanctions in the area of weapon development/deployment/proliferation (say, cruise missile technology transfer to allies), have no future — because no Soviet Government could garner a domestic consensus for their approval. However, in defense of an agnostic position, it would be interesting to see how a radical SALT proposal would fare, were it backed by appropriate sanctions. (For example, how would the Soviet Union have responded to President Carter's 'comprehensive proposal' of March 1977, had the MX follow-on ICBM program been two, instead of nearly ten, years away from substantial deployment?)

The SALT process should be abrogated today if the American Administration is not prepared to recognize the salience of three fundamental questions: (1) what do we want to achieve?; (2) with what can we live, should (1) prove incapable of accomplishment?; and (3) how do we maximize the prospects that (1) might be achieved, while making adequate provision for a range of answers to (2)?

Western publics should understand that arms control has never offered a satisfactory alternative path to the national security, as compared with unilateral military effort. Disarmament tends to be achieved only through victory in war (the vanquished are disarmed and the victors dictate the terms of peace), while arms control tends to be achieved only as a consequence of persuading rivals that, in the absence of agreement, large-scale building programs can and will be undertaken (e.g., the United States *vis à vis* Great Britain and Japan in 1921-22). In short, there are no cheap and clever devices for rescuing the SALT process from a succession of agreements that are of little more than cosmetic value: if there were, a man

as intelligent and adept as Henry Kissinger would have found them.

### Persuasion is Programs

SALT is not a matter of weapons alone. Indeed, for a country that enjoys a GNP at least twice that of its arms competitive rival, domestic political support for future weapon programs should be usable in lieu of weapons in hand (to some degree, at least). If the SALT exercise is to produce agreements that would merit the ascription *arms-control*, what should be done by the United States?

First, it should be recognized that the coin of the SALT negotiating realm is money committed to weapons that speak to Soviet anxieties. (In 1977, one can, just about, cash a cruise missile card; one cannot cash an MX card that is not scheduled to achieve an initial operating capability before 1984). Second, one should evolve a fairly stable strategic doctrine. Dire threats of weapon deployment are far more credible if the weapons thus brandished have unambiguously useful roles to play in authoritative, established strategic doctrine. Third, the American President has to take the American people into his confidence on a fairly regular basis with respect to the state of play in SALT and the strategic balance considerations that underpin his negotiating strategy. Save for a brief period early in 1977, the United States Government has neglected to attend to its domestic (general public) base on strategic arms-control questions. To open up the structure of SALT-relevant issues to the public, in language that should be widely comprehensible, is not the same as to conduct an open SALT diplomacy — as, ill-advisedly, did President Carter in March 1977. Finally, the United States Government should organize, and make use of, detailed studies of Soviet arms-control and strategy-related phenomena. In short, in order to discourage the debilitating practice of 'mirror imaging' the negotiating adversary, a far more realistic and continuing study should be made of Soviet reality, in Soviet terms (to the extent possible).

It is not good enough to say, as did Henry Kissinger of the Vladivostok Accords of November 24, 1974, that a particular agreement set 'a cap on the arms race'. A cap on what? A cap on numbers of strategic nuclear delivery vehicles and MIRV

launchers is no cap at all, because one is capping the wrong things. If the right things cannot be capped (i.e., the throw-weight and accuracy), then probably it is sensible to discontinue the SALT enterprise altogether — since its continuation serves merely to distract scarce talent from serious problems, to foster impossible hopes of eventual substantive arms-control success, and to complicate needlessly the activities of defense planners. If the latter case obtains, the benefits of a SALT-type diplomatic institution need not be foresworn entirely. A SALT-successor institution, not charged with negotiating arms limitations, could function for the exchange of technical information and ideas — as and when the Superpowers deemed such message-passing to be useful.

Many people continue to be puzzled as to why it is that a SALT 2 treaty is so difficult to negotiate. Typical explanations offer commentaries upon specific issues in dispute — say the *Backfire* bomber and American cruise missiles — but the underlying problems tend to escape attention. SALT is not an adequate institution in terms of its mandate and agenda for the traffic that it must bear. For, so long as NATO lacks the capability to offset the Soviet M/IRBM force (and its reloads), 'essential equivalence' in strategic weapons must work to the Soviet advantage. One is talking of roughly equal armaments for very different foreign-policy supportive tasks. "Gray-area" weapon system issues, like cruise missiles and medium range bombers, should be seen not as a problem for SALT, but as a healthy reminder of the fact that Western security interests comprise a seamless web of North American/NATO-European assets that need defending. The current Soviet insistence that American forward-based systems (in Europe) must be a subject for attention in SALT 3 should be welcomed — in tandem with an American *insistence* that Soviet weapons threatening to Western Europe must also be on the agenda. This linkage should be absolute and non-negotiable on the American part. In support of this position, development of a ground-launched cruise missile (GLCM) and an extended-range *Pershing* should be accorded high priority.

### Soviet-American Rivalry

An argument which the arms control community tends not to like is to the effect that SALT prospects founder upon the

arms-control negotiating consequences of the Soviet political worldview, and the military strategy (and supporting weapons procurement) which flows from that worldview. Any person seriously concerned about the fate of the SALT endeavor has to be disturbed by the following facts: Soviet strategic doctrine equates deterrent efficacy with war-waging prowess; the Soviet Union sees itself locked into an adversary relationship with antagonistic social systems — hence SALT is but one aspect of a broad-fronted and inescapable *competition* for the most basic of ends. These facts impinge upon the issue-area of ideology, and may be held to be suspect for that reason, yet they do speak to the most fundamental of questions that pertain to SALT. How does SALT fit into the totality of East-West-relations? Do American negotiators share tolerably congruent assumptions concerning the nature of the SALT exercise with their Soviet counterparts, so that balanced agreements that really would cut into defense postural intentions are within the bounds of negotiating possibility? What functions do SALT agreements serve?

It is not essential that each contracting party should submit to an arms control regime for identical reasons, but some differences in perspective could matter a great deal. For example, it does matter whether Soviet leaders see a SALT 2 as a minor milestone on a conflict road that leads to the eventual triumph of the Soviet definition of the Will of History, or whether they see a SALT 2 as a milestone on a road that leads to the eventual reconciliation of political differences. Under the former assumption the Soviet Union will attempt to build forces (presumably straining to treaty limits — by generous definition) which should maximize political leverage for the inalienable struggle; while, under the latter assumption, the Soviet leadership should be willing to attempt a reciprocation in strategic restraint. If the essentially competitive assumption is correct, then the only SALT regime acceptable to the Soviet Union will be one that offers them a more attractive competitive performance than would a context bereft of formal restraint.

In most human activity, the best tends to be the enemy of the good. This aphorism applies with particular poignancy to SALT. In practical terms, politicians and officials have to decide how much arms control restraint is good enough to be worthy

of, and defensible in, treaty status. The Carter Administration, thus far, has eschewed this choice in that it has signified its willingness to endorse either a substantial or an unsubstantial (but believed to be balanced) agreement. Given the bureaucratic and political forces in both capitals that are intensively suspicious of all proposed arms-control arrangements, and given the dynamism in the quality of strategic technology, it is sensible to have low expectations of the SALT process. Aside from those two enduring structural problems, it is well to remember that the arms competition is driven by a political rivalry that has to find military expression. Even if it were possible to remove strategic forces from political calculations by means of a SALT regime, the differing geopolitics of the Soviet and American alliance systems render that (hypothetical) option unattractive for the West.<sup>7</sup>

### Advice to Negotiators

With respect to specific negotiating advice, two apparently simple-minded dicata should be borne in mind. First, the Soviet Union will never sign-on for an arms-control regime that clearly is not in its best interest (*sic transit* the Carter comprehensive proposal of March 1977). Second, in order to induce Soviet acquiescence in an arms-control regime that is stabilizing by Western definition, Soviet leaders will have to be persuaded, by American actions, that a SALT regime offers the least of several highly plausible evils.

Eight years of SALT experience yield some elementary items of advice that the West ignores at its peril. In summary form: clever or *sympathetic* diplomacy cannot substitute for real strategic programs (Henry Kissinger related to Andrei Gromyko and Leonid Brezhnev as well as one could ask of any American Secretary of State — but this ease in communication did not translate into worthwhile SALT agreements); in arms-control negotiations you secure what you pay for (or what you signify *credibly* that you are willing to pay for) — no

7. A SALT regime, which *de facto*, deprived strategic weapons of international political significance (through really deep cuts in numbers/throwweight — accomplished in a genuinely balanced fashion), would mean that NATO-Europe would have no credible recourse to trans-Atlantic strategic assistance. In short, NATO-Europe would have to be defended by locally-deployed forces.

more and no less (if you negotiate competently). You probably have a choice, to negotiate for worthwhile limitation, or solely for *pro forma* regimes — either is defensible, provided one recognizes the nature of the game that actually is being played (and hence can determine a policy on strategic development and procurement which speaks to reality rather than aspiration). It is understood very widely that the arms competition between the Superpowers is of a *qualitative* character, yet successive American Administrations wax enthusiastic about *quantitative* restrictions (on strategic nuclear delivery vehicles and MIRV launchers).

President Carter should determine that he is very serious about effecting *qualitative* arms-control — which requires prior investment in American strategic programs which threaten high-value Soviet strategic resources — while he is prepared to live with the kind of arms-control tokenism represented by the more balanced provisions of SALT 1 and the Vladivostok Accords. What matters is that he distinguishes clearly between the two categories in his mind, and that he appreciates that the Soviet leaders will not concede anything in negotiation that the United States has not unambiguously demonstrated a willingness to fund through to operational capability.

## SALT 2: The State of Play, the Road Forward

The Interim Agreement on Strategic Offensive Forces of SALT 1 expired on October 3, 1977. An informal extension is most likely to be effected, pending resolution of the outstanding SALT 2 issues (specifically: cruise missiles and *Backfire*). It may not appreciate the fact, but the Carter Administration will be granted an opportunity to review the most basic elements in its SALT policy. The manifest failure of the SALT 2 negotiations, after four-and-a-half years of effort, embracing three Presidents, should be reason enough for President Carter to question both the goals and the negotiating strategy pursued in SALT thus far.

November-December 1977 would be a highly appropriate time for the President to tell the American people that: (a) SALT is about strategic substance, or it is about nothing worthy of continued effort; (b) the United States has a very clear understanding of what contributes to, and what detracts from, strategic *stability*, and that such American understanding

will comprise the unalterable basis of American SALT negotiating practice, henceforth; and that, therefore, (c) all existing SALT offers, and tentative offers, are being withdrawn. Preferably on nation-wide television, the President would say that since the United States has a gross national product (and a scientific-industrial base) at least three times the size of that of the Soviet Union, it doesn't feel obliged to acquiesce to Soviet definitions of *stability* or "rough equivalence." Specifically, he should announce that since the principal threat to strategic stability over the next decade, by anybody's calculations, is the threat of MIRVed ICBMs to the ICBMs of the other side housed in silos, the United States will insist upon (a) determination of a common ceiling for ICBM throwweight, and (b) revision of the ABM Treaty of 1972 so as to permit ballistic missile defense of ICBM complexes. Neither position is discriminatory against the Soviet Union — in terms of end results — though the former would reflect rejection of the acceptability of a Soviet ICBM throwweight superiority that currently is on the order of 4:1.

The Administration should admit that the degree to which it feels able to be relaxed over ALCM range and the categorization of *Backfire* depends not a little upon the confidence that it reposes in the second strike survivability of *Minuteman-Titan*. In support of its new SALT negotiating position, that ICBM throwweight should be subject to a common ceiling, the Administration would announce the acceleration of the MX ICBM program, and would commit itself, very publicly, to the concept of land-mobile deployment. In addition, as suggested above, the ABM Treaty review exercise would be anything but a *pro forma* enterprise. The official position of the United States would be that renewed acceptance of the treaty, as is, would depend critically upon Soviet acceptance of a common throwweight ceiling on ICBMs. Should the Soviet Union be unwilling to make such an undertaking, the United States would insist that terminal ABM defenses of ICBM fields be permitted. With regard to strategic cruise missiles, the United States would say that it sees no arms control grounds for restricting this class of technology. American cruise missiles do not threaten strategic stability — if the Soviets feel threatened by cruise missiles, that is because they intend to seek to defend targets that the United States believes should

be vulnerable to attack. By American definition, a cruise missile capability against civilian-industrial assets is desirable and stabilizing. The Soviets should be required to specify just why it is they find long-range cruise missiles to be de-stabilizing. With respect to the survivability of Soviet strategic forces, American ALCMs pose a serious threat only to missile *reloads*. An American President should *not* be sympathetic to this concern. In short, the arms-control case against the cruise missile looks distinctly fragile.<sup>8</sup>

The realities of the SALT negotiations are, of course, likely to be resisted strongly by a President who feels himself indebted, for reasons that are very obscure indeed, to the liberal arms-control establishment. However, folly is folly, whatever the political tie may be. In this article it has been suggested that the Soviet leadership can be induced to sign-on for balanced and non-cosmetic SALT terms only if the United States offers very plausible evidence of a willingness to take unilateral strategic postural action that should diminish markedly the Soviet sense of strategic confidence over the decade ahead. By investing in strategic assets (particularly the MX ICBM) the United States should both enhance the prospects for negotiating success in SALT, and provide a very badly needed hedge against the total breakdown in negotiations.

8. See Colin S. Gray, "Who's Afraid of the Cruise Missile?" *Orbis*, forthcoming.

I would like to thank Donald G. Brennan for his contribution to my understanding of some of the issues discussed in this article.

# Journal of International Relations

ROGER PEARSON, *General Editor*

Vol. 2  
Summer 1977  
No. 2

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*The Journal of International Relations* is published quarterly by The Council on American Affairs, The American Foreign Policy Institute and The American Security Council Education Foundation. The annual subscription is U.S. \$12.50. All Subscriptions and business correspondence should be addressed to The Publisher, The Journal of International Relations, c/o The American Security Council Education Foundation, Boston, Virginia 22713 (Tel. 703.825.1776). Editorial correspondence (only) should be addressed to The Editor, The Journal of International Relations, c/o The Council on American Affairs, Suite 210, 1785 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

# Toward Necessary Reform of Social Security

DANIEL ORR

## I. INTRODUCTION

Social security is a program with a history. It serves certain objectives, and has certain economic and social consequences. It has a clientele of political adherents, not all of whom derive the same benefits from every phase of the program's operation. Nobody fully understands the history, and economic consequences, and social consequences, and clientele effects of social security. Even recognizing those daunting facts, this paper undertakes to analyze certain reform proposals that have been directed at social security. It makes explicit assumptions about (or describes an explicit understanding of) the "problems" which can be expected to grow worse if the program is unchanged. It sets forth norms or goals that the program should serve. The process of assessing the reform proposals of others has led to a synthetic reform proposal. No more can be claimed for it than that it offers, or at least begins to offer, a way to solve the problems as described here, and to meet the goals as propounded here.

Effectively, this essay is directed to the retirement aspect of social security. Health plans, death benefits, and disability insurance are assumed to be separable policy issues, and to merit separate discussion. Clearly, in the proposal offered in Section III, attention to disability and death benefits is also necessary.

During recent months, several commentaries on problems facing social security have become available.<sup>1</sup> Some of those

1. For example, Michael J. Boskin (editor), *The Crisis in Social Security, Problems and Prospects*, San Francisco, Institute for Contemporary Studies, 1977; Robert S. Kaplan, *Financial Crisis in the Social Security System*, Washington, D.C., American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, Domestic Affairs Study 47, June 1976; J. W. Van Gorkom, *Social Security - The Long-Term Deficit*, Washington, D.C., American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy, Social Security and Retirement Policy 7, 1976; Martin Feldstein, "Social Insurance," in