

EYES ONLY

June 28, 1986

TO: JOHN M. POINDEXTER *M 6-30*

THROUGH: RODNEY B. MCDANIEL *JF*

FROM: JACK F. MATLOCK

SUBJECT: Scheduling Meetings with Soviets

As you know, in his recent letter Gorbachev proposed a series of meetings of "specialists" which would prepare for a meeting of foreign ministers, at which time selection would be made of which topics are most suitable to prepare for results at the summit meeting. (The letter did not address a time for the foreign ministers' meeting, but Dubinin mentioned "the eve of" the UNGA in September -- presumably around the second week in September.)

I believe the Soviet proposal is a reasonable one, and we should try to arrange for appropriate meetings by "specialists" during the summer. The most urgent one to make a decision on is that on nuclear testing, since Gorbachev's letter proposed early July. (In the other cases, he did not suggest dates.)

The subjects Gorbachev mentioned are the following:

✓ Nuclear Testing: In effect, Gorbachev has now picked up the President's offer to have specialists meet to discuss verification and whatever ideas the Soviets wish to advance. In my opinion, there should be no question as to whether we do this -- it is our proposal -- but only when and by whom. Early July is too soon to make the arrangements, but we should shoot for a date later in the month.

State, without consulting me, has proposed that either Kennedy or I head our delegation. I believe neither of us should. Kennedy is inappropriate since I feel that we should not mix power plant safety, IAEA and non-proliferation issues with the testing question. Also, this is an area in which I can hardly claim to be an expert and I believe someone who does have a specialist's knowledge should do it.

Since there is likely to be sharp interagency division on some of the issues involved, it would probably be helpful if the delegation were chaired by the NSC. Linhard is an obvious candidate, if we can spare him here for a few days. Also Lynton Brooks.

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Conventional Forces: The suggestion for consultations on this topic is probably a device to get Gorbachev's recent proposals in play. I do not see much reason for us to take it very seriously, but it might not hurt to suggest that Blackwill meet with his MBFR counterpart during the intersessional. This should be done only if the Allies do not object, and would probably require us to get some Allied consensus in advance as to what we want to say about Gorbachev's conventional arms proposals in general. In particular, we should be prepared to indicate under what conditions (if ever) we might agree to negotiations. (For example, only following an MBFR agreement, successful conclusion of the CDE, and an appropriate mandate worked out at the Vienna CSCE Review Conference?)

Confidence Building Measures in Europe: This proposal seems to refer to CDE, and it would not hurt to suggest a private meeting between Amb. Barry and his counterpart. If we wish, we could also ask for another session on risk reduction centers under this rubric.

Chemical Weapons: We should take them up on this, focussing on the verification provisions of our draft treaty. It would be helpful if we could compose our differences with the British on verification in advance. Younger's visit may provide an opportunity, although some modification of the DOD position will probably be necessary for this.

Regional Issues: I doubt that we need schedule any more meetings on these other than the ones already in train, or just completed. Shultz is still interested in taking up Afghanistan with Shevardnadze before there is another round on that topic.

Bilateral Issues: We should take them up on this, since it will allow us to address a number of issues on our agenda, particularly human rights. Ridgway would seem the logical delegation chief on our side.

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It is probably going to take a strong push to get the bureaucracy to focus on organizing properly for this meetings, but I think it is necessary to do so. I also think that it is important to keep direct NSC participation in all of them. This will probably be necessary to dampen interagency bickering and to ensure that the consultations move in the direction the President desires.