

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

17 January 1976

*Memo For* SEC DEF

Attached is the answer to Senator Kennedy et al on the letter to you concerning cruise missiles and the BACKFIRE. The letter has been revised based on your changes. The NSC (Bill Hyland) concurs.



Attachments  
as stated

JAW

~~TOP SECRET~~



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

9 January 1976

*Memo For* COL. GRAVES

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO SENATOR KENNEDY LETTER

At 1400 hours today, received a verbal concurrence from Mr. William Hyland per the Secretary of Defense request.

Here is the package ready to go again.



HARRY SAUERWEIN  
Deputy Director  
DoD SALT Task Force

Attachment  
a/s





OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

*W*  
*get me*  
*1/6/76*

31 December 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: Response to Senator Kennedy Letter of December 19, 1975,  
on SALT

Attached is a proposed response to the letter of December 19, 1975, sent to you by Senator Edward Kennedy and 16 other Senators, dealing with the current SALT TWO negotiations.

Senator Kennedy's letter urges conclusion of the SALT TWO agreement before the 1976 presidential elections and cites two issues - the Backfire bomber and strategic-range cruise missiles - as issues of particular concern. The Senators urge you to work for a total ban on cruise missiles of range greater than 600 km, and urge your support for a mutual moratorium on the testing of such missiles. They question the value of such missiles for the US, and ask the SALT implications of the completion of the cruise missile test programs. The Senators also advocate the prompt conclusion of a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

*would not be in the U.S. interest to limit or to delay testing of these systems*

The proposed response avoids discussing aspects bearing on the current negotiations. It sets forth the US requirements for long range cruise missiles and indicates it is likely that the cruise missile issue will be resolved before the missiles are tested and ready for deployment. Finally, it defers discussion of a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty pending ratification and implementation of the Threshold Ban Treaty.

I recommend that you sign the attached response. It has been coordinated with DDR&E, ASD(LA) and ASD(PA). CJCS also concurs.

*James P. Wade, Jr.*  
JAMES P. WADE, JR.  
Director  
DoD SALT Task Force

Attachment  
a/s

*Nsc concurs - Bill Hyland*

*OK* *(W)*



*ASG*



*5/1/09*

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

December 19, 1975

The Honorable  
Donald H. Rumsfeld  
Secretary of Defense  
The Pentagon  
Washington, DC

Dear Mr. Secretary:

As you assume your new duties as Secretary of Defense, we would like to express our support for the success of current negotiations at the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks in Geneva, to conclude the Vladivostok Accords and such other agreements on strategic arms that would be in the national interest of the United States. We would like to pledge our support for efforts you might make to support the conclusion of these agreements, within the next few months.

We believe that the continuing momentum of the strategic arms race makes conclusion of further agreements to limit these arms of critical importance to the security of the United States. By contrast, we believe that delay until after next year's Presidential elections in concluding the Vladivostok accords, and in taking further steps to limit both the quantitative and the qualitative arms race, would seriously retard the chances of reaching an effective agreement in the future.

In particular, we are concerned about two issues that had not been raised at the time of the Vladivostok Agreements of last November: strategic-range cruise missiles and the Soviet Backfire bomber.

With regard to strategic-range cruise missiles, whether deployed by the United States or by the Soviet Union, we believe that --- once these systems are tested --- problems of independent verification could be so difficult, and any increase in US security from adding these weapons to existing arsenals could be so marginal (or even self-defeating if SALT were impaired), that a total prohibition on testing, building, and deployment of these missiles by both sides would be in everyone's interest.



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The Honorable  
Donald H. Rumsfeld

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December 19, 1975

We therefore urge you to work for a total ban on cruise missiles, beyond a range of 600 kilometers, in the current round of SALT talks; and in any event, we urge your support for a mutual moratorium on testing of strategic-range cruise missiles until firm controls can be agreed upon.

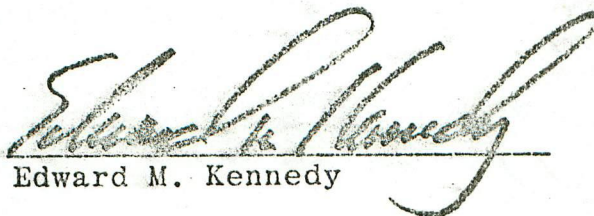
Finally, we believe that negotiations to seek prompt conclusion of a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, replacing the pending Threshold Test-Ban Treaty, would be in the national interest of the United States in terms both of the US-Soviet strategic arms race, and of helping to limit the spread of nuclear weapons to other countries.

We are sending these views, in full awareness of the complexities of the cruise missile issue, in an effort to contribute constructively to debate on strategic weapons programs and the SALT process. We hope that these views will be received in the same spirit, and that you will share with us your ideas on the proposals we have made. We would also be interested in learning your views on two questions: what value would strategic-range cruise missiles have for the United States? And what would be the implications for SALT, once they are tested and ready for deployment?

We look forward to working with you on these critical issues.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

  
Edward M. Kennedy

  
Charles McC. Mathias, Jr.

  
Walter F. Mondale

  
George S. McGovern



The Honorable  
Donald H. Rumsfeld

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December 19, 1975

*Mike Gravel*

Mike Gravel

*Patrick J. Leahy*

Patrick J. Leahy

*Dick Clark*

Dick Clark

*Mark O. Hatfield*

Mark O. Hatfield

*Lee Metcalf*

Lee Metcalf

*Gaylord Nelson*

Gaylord Nelson

*Floyd K. Haske*

Floyd K. Haske

*Claiborne Pell*

Claiborne Pell

*Frank Church*

Frank Church

*William D. Hathaway*

William D. Hathaway

*Alan Cranston*

*Lucy N. Burris*

*Samuel Albritton Jr.*



THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301

Honorable Edward M. Kennedy  
United States Senate  
Washington, D. C. 20510

Dear Ted:

Thank you for your letter of December 19, 1975, concerning the ongoing Strategic Arms Limitation Talks. Your expression of support for the success of these difficult negotiations is ~~most~~ welcome. I share your hope that agreement between the two sides can be reached within the next few months. However, as you ~~pointed~~ <sup>point</sup> out, there are complex issues associated with these negotiations. ~~SALT~~ <sup>These</sup> complexities make it ~~imperative~~ <sup>particularly important</sup> that each step of the negotiations be taken with due deliberation. This is the manner in which we are ~~now~~ proceeding.

The two issues to which you directed particular attention - strategic range cruise missiles and the Soviet Backfire bomber - are important ones, and are receiving considerable attention, ~~both from myself and from others within the government.~~ As you appreciate, the negotiations with the USSR currently include considerations on cruise missiles. <sup>those</sup> Therefore, at this time, I would prefer not to discuss in detail aspects which do bear on the ongoing negotiations. However, let me respond to your specific questions as to the value of long-range cruise missiles for the US, and the SALT implications of testing of such missiles.

As you are aware, the ABM Treaty precludes a nationwide defense against a significant attack by ICBMs or SLBMs. Such is not the case for US bomber forces, however, in that there are no limitations on air defenses. The effectiveness of the US bomber force must be maintained in the face of ~~ever~~ increasing Soviet air defense capabilities. This requirement has led to the development of the Air-Launched Cruise Missile (ALCM). Bombers equipped with long-range ALCMs ~~will~~ <sup>could</sup> be able to stay out of range of projected Soviet air defenses, forcing those defenses to attack each cruise missile individually, rather than permitting them to attack the bomber itself. <sup>Such a saturation</sup> ~~attack~~ <sup>capability</sup> will complicate Soviet air defense planning and will enhance the ability of other bombers to penetrate the Soviet air defenses.



The role of the US Sea-Launched Cruise Missile (SLCM) is different from that of the ALCM, which complements and enhances the effectiveness of one leg of the Triad. Although the SLCM is also of potential use as a survivable strategic reserve, its primary role will be to provide the US with a survivable and flexible theater nuclear capability, a means for augmenting the carrier forces in their sea control mission, and a means for carrying out ~~limited response and regional~~ <sup>other</sup> options.

Admittedly, once long-range cruise missiles are fully tested and ready for deployment, their effective limitation would be more difficult. However, in view of the projected 1980-1981 initial operating capability of the US SLCM and ALCM programs, and the apparent absence of Soviet requirements and thus programs, for such long-range systems, it is unlikely that such a condition will be reached prior to resolution of the cruise missile issue in the current negotiations. Furthermore, as indicated above, I do not believe that limitations of the kind you suggest on these systems would be in the interest of the United States.

W  
JAC me

With regard to the matter of a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, I believe it most important at this time to concentrate our efforts on successfully concluding the negotiations on Peaceful Nuclear Explosions, which <sup>world</sup> will pave the way to ratification and implementation of the Threshold Test Ban Treaty.

I hope that the foregoing discussion makes clear my views on the questions you raised. I shall welcome further discussion with you on these issues.

A similar letter has been sent to the other signatories of your letter of December 19.

Sincerely,

Robin White Para.

