



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

January 22, 1983

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MEMORANDUM FOR MR. WILLIAM P. CLARK
THE WHITE HOUSE

Subject: Chemical Weapons Arms Control Policy

In its meeting Friday, January 14, the Interagency Group (IG) on CBW Arms Control unanimously approved the policy recommendations contained in the attached paper (at Tab A) which are hereby submitted for approval. The issues papers considered by the IG in formulating these policy recommendations are also attached (at Tabs B and C).

Charles Field

L. Paul Bremer, III
Executive Secretary

Attachments:

- Tab A - Chemical Weapons Arms Control Policy Recommendations
- Tab B - Issue Paper: US Detailed Views on a CW Convention
- Tab C - Issue Paper: 1983 Mandate for CD/CW Working Group

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UNITED STATES CHEMICAL WEAPONS ARMS CONTROL

POLICY RECOMMENDATION

To enhance United States national security interests, and specifically, to promote our policy objectives in the area of chemical weapons arms control, the United States, following the February 1 opening of the Geneva Committee on Disarmament's (CD) 1983 session, will:

- (1) table, in the CD, the interagency document entitled "U.S. Detailed Views on the Contents of a Chemical Weapons Ban," dated January 14, 1983; and
- (2) support a change in the CD Chemical Weapons Working Group mandate to negotiation of a complete and verifiable chemical weapons ban. Focus will be on development of effective verification and compliance arrangements.

With respect to the status of the paper entitled, "U.S. Detailed Views on the Content of a Chemical Weapons Ban," it is to be understood that:

- the paper is a framework for discussion, and is to serve as the basis for U.S. participation in CD negotiations on a chemical weapons arms control agreement;

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- the paper is subject to modification and further refinement, as deemed appropriate to safeguard U.S. security and foreign policy interests; and thus
- the paper does not constitute a formal United States negotiating position on a proposal for the actual text of any eventual agreement in this area.

With respect to United States policy on CD negotiations on a chemical weapons ban, it is to be understood that:

- the United States will continue to focus efforts in the CD primarily on developing effective verification and compliance arrangements for a complete chemical weapons ban;
- verification and compliance arrangements, beyond those set forth in the paper "U.S. Detailed Views on the Content of a Chemical Weapons Ban," should be formulated and negotiated in the CD to reduce risks from undetected evasion; and
- the United States will not support or participate in the drafting of actual treaty text until an effective verification and compliance framework, acceptable to the United States, has been negotiated.

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It is also to be understood, in this regard, that the United States decision to support CD negotiations on a complete chemical weapons ban:

-- requires that the modernization of short-and-long range chemical weapons proceed on an urgent basis to enable the United States to gain negotiating leverage in the area of chemical weapons arms control, and so that the United States has a credible and effective deterrent/retaliatory capability until such time as a complete and verifiable prohibition of chemical weapons has been obtained;

-- will require that we continue to make the direct connection between Soviet and surrogate use of toxin and other chemical weapons in Afghanistan and Southeast Asia and the need for effective verification and compliance measures in any future chemical weapons agreement;

-- is made without prejudice to decisions the United States may make concerning initiation of CD negotiations in areas or on issues other than chemical weapons arms control.

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US Detailed Views on a CW Convention

ISSUE FOR DECISION

Should the U.S. table, early in the CD session, its paper containing "detailed views" on the content of a CW Convention?

ESSENTIAL FACTORS

-- The 1983 Session of the 40-Nation CD opens in Geneva on February 1.

-- Vice President Bush will deliver the U.S. delegation's opening statement to the CD on February 3. It is planned that his speech will make clear the U.S. view that CW discussions should be intensified and address the U.S. views on a complete and verifiable CW ban.

-- An interagency paper containing U.S. "detailed views" on the content of a CW Convention has been prepared, discussed with key U.S. Allies, and revised on the basis of those discussions.

BACKGROUND

The U.S. is in an excellent tactical position in the CW discussions in the CD. Conversely, the Soviets are on the defensive.

Unlike the Soviets, who presented last summer their proposed provisions for a CW ban, the U.S. has not presented detailed views. The U.S. has only put forward a number of "general points" which outline our overall approach. However, it has been agreed on an interagency basis that detailed U.S. views are needed if we are to maintain our tactical advantage. Our key Allies have also urged us to put forward detailed views to demonstrate the seriousness of the U.S. commitment.

A draft "detailed views" paper was prepared on an interagency basis and, pursuant to IG authorization, presented to key Allies for comment. In response, the Allies strongly urged us to present the paper at the CD and supported the overall U.S. approach. A revised draft has been prepared which takes into account, insofar as possible, the detailed comments made by the Allies.

Concurrently the IG Working Group has been preparing a study of verification of a CW ban. This study has not been completed. The "detailed views" paper contains the verification provisions outlined in the current draft of the Verification Study.

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OPTIONS

There are two options:

(1) To table the "detailed views" paper early in the CD session, making clear U.S. views are subject to modification based on further study and discussion.

(2) Not to present a detailed U.S. position on a CW Convention in the near future.

DISCUSSION

The question is one of tactics -- how best to keep the pressure on the Soviets. Tabling a detailed position early in the CD session would be very helpful in persuading others that the U.S. is serious about CW arms control -- and by contrast increase doubts about Soviet sincerity. It would also provide a rallying point for Western efforts to press the Soviets on verification and compliance issues. Without a clear and detailed U.S. position it will be significantly more difficult to keep the Soviets on the defensive.

A drawback is that further interagency study may lead to additions or modifications in the U.S. position on verification. However, the overall approach and general features of the U.S. position are not in doubt. Since progress in resolving verification issues is likely to be quite slow, the U.S. will be able to make adjustments in its position later if that should be judged necessary.

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1983 Mandate for CD/CW Working Group

ISSUE FOR DECISION

Should the US support a change in the current mandate of the Committee on Disarmament (CD) Working Group on Chemical Weapons (CW) to allow initiation of negotiations on a complete CW ban?

ESSENTIAL FACTORS

-- NSDD-18 states that the U.S. will "support chemical weapons arms control discussions in the Committee on Disarmament leading to multilateral negotiations in the Committee on Disarmament on a chemical weapons prohibition, if further interagency study should support such a step."

-- The 1983 session of the 40-nation CD opens in Geneva on February 1. Preliminary chemical weapons discussions begin in Geneva on January 17.

-- Vice President Bush will deliver the US Delegation's opening statement to the CD on February 3. It is planned that his speech will make clear the US view that CW discussions should be intensified and address the US position on a complete and verifiable CW ban.

BACKGROUND

The US has participated in multilateral discussions on the question of concluding a complete prohibition of CW for a number of years. In Spring 1977, the US and USSR initiated bilateral negotiations on such a prohibition. After two years of negotiations, however, Soviet intransigence on key verification issues prevented further progress. No further rounds of the bilateral talks were held after the summer of 1980. On January 4, 1982, President Reagan decided that bilateral US/Soviet negotiations in this area should be allowed to lapse informally. Instead, it was decided that U.S. efforts to achieve a CW ban would be centered in the CD.

In Spring 1980, the CD established, for the first time, a formal working group on CW. At US insistence, the Group's work was limited to identifying and defining issues to be dealt with in eventual multilateral negotiations on a CW ban. In 1982 the Group's mandate was changed to allow it to begin "elaboration" of a CW prohibition. In agreeing to this change the US made clear its view that the working group:

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- (1) should focus on resolving verification and compliance issues; and
- (2) was not authorized to begin actual "negotiation" of a CW treaty text.

The CD Working Group on CW has approached its work seriously. Currently the U.S. is in an excellent tactical position. Active and constructive U.S. participation and evidence of Soviet CW use has helped to produce widespread Allied and neutral/non-aligned support for the US position that effective verification and compliance arrangements are essential. The US was hesitant about agreeing to "negotiate" but it is now clear, however, that there is broad support for effective verification. There is also greater understanding of the many technical, as well as political, difficulties which have to be resolved -- many of which, it is recognized, do not depend simply on "political will" -- before an agreement can be concluded. The Soviets, on the other hand, are very much on the defensive, both over compliance with existing treaties and on their approach to verification which has been subjected to considerable criticism. Doubts have been expressed by certain CD members about the Soviet Union's sincerity in professing support for concluding an effective CW ban, due in large part to their refusal to engage in detailed discussions of key issues or to expand on the "basic provisions" Gromyko presented last summer. The Soviet response has been to try to defuse the pressures on them by tactical maneuvers, particularly by trying to divert attention to the US modernization program, to non-controversial topics, and to procedural issues. Their objective clearly has been to put the U.S. on the defensive.

The United States, though supported substantively, has been strongly criticized for "procedural obstructionism" -- specifically, for preventing the CD from carrying out its multilateral negotiating responsibility in this area. The majority of CD members have been trying to initiate multilateral "negotiations" on CW since 1979. The US has consistently blocked such a move. Now even our closest Allies (e.g., UK, FRG and France) have joined the rest of the CD's members in urging us to change our position.

OPTIONS

The US has two courses of action open to it:

(1) Continue to oppose CD "negotiations", on the grounds that considerable work remains to be done under the Working Group's current mandate (to "elaborate") before actual "negotiations" could be productive; or

(2) Support a change in the mandate to allow initiation of CD "negotiations".

DISCUSSION

Whether one is "elaborating" or "negotiating", the slow process of resolving the numerous and difficult substantive issues and concluding an acceptable agreement will remain the same. Drafting treaty text clearly remains premature until agreement on an acceptable verification framework has been reached.

There are a number of arguments which have been made by some of our Allies and others on this issue which have merit. Specifically;

- Agreeing to a new mandate would help defeat the Soviets' effort to hide behind procedural issues and help to focus attention on key unresolved substantive issues which are largely in the area of on-site inspection. In so doing we would be exploiting the ambiguities in the Soviet position.

- Agreeing to a new mandate would also demonstrate to the Congress, US Allies and the international community the seriousness of the US commitment on CW arms control. It would undermine one argument made by critics of the U.S. CW modernization programs and skeptics about US charges on "yellow rain". This in turn would increase the credibility of the US verification position and stimulate greater pressure on the Soviets over their unforthcoming position on verification/compliance.

Vice President Bush will be attending the CD in early February and addressing our position on CW. Under these circumstances US agreement to CD negotiations on the subject would gain significant political advantages in the arms control area for the U.S. We would play a decision to support negotiations in a way to gain maximum political advantage both domestically and internationally.

Supporting a change in the mandate, however, is not without risks. We could expect the Soviets to step up their efforts to begin drafting of treaty text in areas of agreement in the hope of reducing attention to key verification issues. However, there is broad support for our view that it is premature to initiate drafting before agreement on an acceptable verification framework is reached. To protect our position regarding drafting we should confirm that the Allies will support our approach and ensure that our views are clearly understood in the CD. We would have to make clear that the basis of the U.S. negotiating approval would be the U.S. detailed views paper. We would also make clear, agreeing to negotiate a CW ban would not imply that we are willing to accept a similar mandate in other areas in the CD which are not ready for negotiations.