

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

6954670

April 8, 1969

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger *K*

SUBJECT: Nuclear Arms Control of the Seabeds

The debate on arms control of the seabeds has moved more rapidly at the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Conference in Geneva than was anticipated during our discussion of the subject at the NSC meeting on March 15. The Soviet Union has now tabled a draft treaty prohibiting all military uses of the seabeds. ACDA would like to counter the unacceptable Soviet draft treaty with a U.S. draft treaty for nuclear arms control of the seabeds. Moreover, ACDA believes that there is evidence that such a treaty might be acceptable to the Soviet Union.

As you recall, Secretary Laird and General Wheeler expressed reservations about such a treaty at the March 15 NSC meeting. Nevertheless, on the understanding that the negotiation of such a treaty would take a long time, Gerry Smith was authorized to take a forthcoming position at the ENDC and indicate our interest in working out an international agreement. In these circumstances, before deciding to accelerate the negotiation by tabling a U.S. draft treaty, I believe the NSC should first consider whether such a treaty would, in fact, be in the over-all U.S. interest; and, if so, on what time scale we should proceed with the negotiations.

The study will have to be conducted on a relatively short time schedule if we want to maintain the option of tabling a draft treaty at the present session of the ENDC which will recess in the middle of May. However, the study should not be difficult for the interested agencies to prepare since much of the material was covered in connection with the preparation for the resumption of the ENDC.

If you approve, I will sign the attached NSSM requesting a study on the issue of a possible treaty on nuclear arms control of the seabeds.

Attachment:

Tab A - NSSM requesting study for a possible U.S. draft treaty

Approve *Bw*

Disapprove \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

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