

# Origins of the Nuclear Suppliers Group

*A Case of US-Soviet Cooperation for Nonproliferation*

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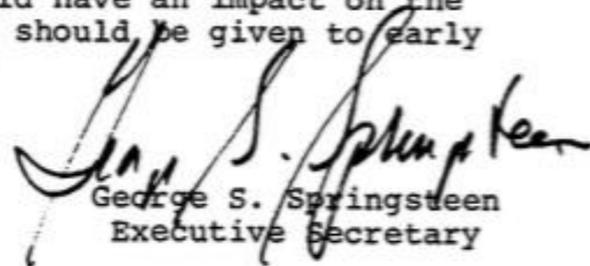
Sarah Bidgood  
Center for Nonproliferation Studies  
May 10, 2018

# BACKGROUND

## 5. Consultation with Other Countries

What others do (especially France, Canada, Germany, Britain, Japan, and the Soviets) will be of great importance in implementing any strategy designed to discourage India from acquiring a sophisticated delivery system and to encourage India to strengthen its peaceful uses declaration and participate in the international safeguards program. Moreover, Canada, Britain, Japan and Germany are gravely concerned about the implications of the Indian test for nuclear non-proliferation and are looking to US leadership. Once our review is complete, we recommend that comprehensive consultations be promptly initiated.

The French and Soviets are also of special importance and an early effort to gain their support and/or cooperation is important to implementing the strategy recommended in NSSM 156 and 202. France has been willing to sell India some nuclear material and know-how without full IAEA safeguards and may well help the Indian space program. Unless France cooperates, efforts to impose tighter controls on sensitive exports are not likely to be effective. We therefore recommend we consult with the French as soon as feasible. The Soviets, who have not provided India much assistance in the nuclear or space field, have considerable influence with Delhi and their cooperation could have an impact on the Indians. Serious consideration should be given to early consultations with the Soviets.



George S. Springsteen  
Executive Secretary

- ▶ US and USSR exported nuclear material and technology without full recognition of proliferation potential
- ▶ Demand for nuclear energy—and complete fuel cycles grew in early 1970s, along with number of exporters
- ▶ Consequences of these policies exposed by India's "Peaceful Nuclear Explosion" in 1974
- ▶ Question arose: How should exports be handled to non-NPT states?



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

RELEASED IN FULL

BRIEFING MEMORANDUM

7418161

N20

~~SECRET/EXLS~~

SEP 18 1974

To: The Secretary

From: S/P - Winston Lord  
ACDA - Fred C. Ikle

Consultations with the Soviets  
on Non-Proliferation Strategy

In response to your request, we have prepared a brief analysis of a possible approach to the Soviets on the question of multilateral nuclear safeguards. Talking points are attached (Tab A) for you to broach, with either Gromyko or Dobrynin, the ideas of greater supplier coordination and a suppliers' conference. We have also attached (Tab B) an informal paper which could be handed over at the same time.

While the Soviets could become major exporters of the full range of nuclear materials, equipment and technology, their exports have in practice been quite limited. They have exported a few research and power reactors, and, in the past few years, have agreed to perform uranium enrichment services for foreign customers. They have not, however, exported highly-enriched uranium or (at least since their experience with the Chinese) uranium or reprocessing technology.

Since the NPT, the Soviets have required IAEA safeguards on all their nuclear exports (with the temporary exception of enrichment contracts with certain Euratom countries) and they have agreed to abide by the export guidelines evolved by the Zangger (Nuclear Exporters') Committee. They did not, however, formally join in the deliberations of that Committee whose members were mainly Western suppliers, and their initial reaction was that the guidelines should apply to a larger range of nuclear-related exports. Finally, they have strongly supported the view that exports to non-nuclear weapon states must not be diverted to PNEs.

This background, which is consistent with the Soviet interest in preventing further proliferation and promoting wide adherence to the NPT, indicates a high probability that

~~SECRET/EXLS~~  
GDS

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
REVIEW AUTHORITY: FRANK H PEREZ  
DATE/CASE ID: 26 AUG 2009 200801472

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MICROFILMED

BY: S/SI

# THE LONDON CLUB BEGINS

- ▶ 1974: Kissinger initiated confidential process of establishing a new body to regulate export to non-NPT states
- ▶ Buy-in of key exporters was regarded as critical, especially USSR
- ▶ ACDA saw Soviet participation as likely, perhaps with some accommodations
- ▶ Developed a strategic approach to gain Soviet support

## BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS

*“There are no export areas in which the Soviets have a less restrictive policy than we do, and the main purposes to be pursued in discussion with them would be to discuss our interest in further coordination of supplier policies.”*

- ▶ US and USSR held four bilateral plenaries to discuss coordinating export controls
- ▶ They examined and revised proposed US guidelines
- ▶ US and Soviet export policies were very similar
- ▶ Past examples of cooperation informed these meetings
- ▶ Both sides agreed that US would consult with other parties and report to USSR

Talking points for Charles Van Doren, 1974

# CHALLENGES

INTERNATIONAL SAFEGUARDS SYSTEM IS INSTITUTED. A SMALL CONFERENCE WOULD PLAY A CONSTRUCTIVE PART IN ASSURING MORE WIDESPREAD EFFORTS BY ALL NUCLEAR INDUSTRIAL STATES.

MR. MINISTER, I WOULD LIKE TO STRESS THAT IN OUR CONTACTS HERE WE ENVISAGE RELATIVELY BRIEF CONSULTATIONS WHICH, I HOPE, WILL RESULT IN AN AGREEMENT ON THE DESIRABILITY OF CONVENING A CONFERENCE OF KEY SUPPLIERS, AND ALSO ON THE ISSUES TO BE DISCUSSED IN THAT FORUM. I'LL HAVE FURTHER COMMENTS LATER AND ELABORATE ON SOME ITEMS IN THE US PAPER.

I HOPE THAT MY REMARKS AND YOURS WILL BRING US CLOSER TOGETHER AND WILL RESULT IN SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS IN CONSIDERATION OF THESE MATTERS. THANK YOU, MR. CHAIRMAN. END QUOTE

MOROKHOV: QUOTE: THANK YOU, MR. AMBASSADOR BUT I'M AFRAID THERE HAS BEEN A MISUNDERSTANDING. WHEN I MENTIONED BROADER PARTICIPATION OF OTHER COUNTRIES, I DID NOT REFER TO THEIR PARTICIPATION IN YOUR PROPOSED CONFERENCE. THE QUESTION OF THE CONFERENCE IS CURRENTLY BEING EXAMINED, AND TODAY I HAVE NOT EXPRESSED ANY OPINION ON WHETHER WE ARE FOR OR AGAINST THAT CONFERENCE. WHEN I SPOKE OF BROADER PARTICIPATION, I REFERRED TO THE NUMBER OF COUNTRIES WHO WOULD ACCEDE TO THE EXISTING AGREEMENT ON ARTICLE III.2 OF AUGUST 22. IT IS IMPORTANT TO GET MORE COUNTRIES TO PARTICIPATE AND GET STRICTER PRIORITIES OF ARTICLE III.2.

SECRET

- US wanted to limit discussions to export controls, while USSR wanted to discuss broader nonproliferation agenda
- Soviet delegates opposed to discussing ways to strengthen export controls with nuclear suppliers who were not party to NPT, US allies
- In 1975, first meetings of the London Club were held among 7 nuclear suppliers.

# US SOVIET COOPERATION: FULL-SCOPE SAFEGUARDS

P 212157Z SEP 77  
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8534  
INFO AMEMBASSY VIENNA PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

CONFIDENTIAL LONDON 15789

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PARM, MNUC  
SUBJECT: SOVIET-US BILATERAL ON NON-PROLIFERATION

1. US DELEGATION TO LONDON SUPPLIERS MEETING HELD TWO BRIEF BILATERAL MEETINGS WITH SOVIETS. THE FIRST MEETING, CHAIRED BY AMBASSADOR SMITH, NECESSARILY DEDICATED LARGELY TO STRATEGY FOR FORTHCOMING SUPPLIERS MEETING. SOVIETS, WHO HAD JUST ARRIVED FROM MEETING WITH FRENCH IN PARIS, WERE EXTREMELY PESSIMISTIC ABOUT ANY FRENCH INTENTION TO ACCEPT FULL SCOPE SAFEGUARDS. AS A CONSEQUENCE, SOVIETS SAID THEY WERE CONSIDERING WITHDRAWING FROM SUPPLIER GROUP AND RESORTING TO UNSPECIFIED UNILATERAL APPROACHES TO ACHIEVE THEIR NON-PROLIFERATION OBJECTIVES.
  2. AMBASSADOR SMITH STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTINUING COOPERATIVE NON-PROLIFERATION EFFORTS IN A MULTILATERAL CONTEXT, AND SAID THAT BREAKUP OF LONDON SUPPLIER GROUP WOULD BE PERCEIVED AS A FAILURE OF SOVIET-US NON-PROLIFERATION EFFORTS. HE RECOMMENDED THAT SOVIETS GO ALONG WITH COMPROMISE AT THIS MEETING
- CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 LONDON 15789 212238Z

France would not agree to full-scope safeguards as a condition of supply

- ▶ US played the role of broker between USSR and other parties (who required full-scope safeguards) and France
- ▶ USSR considered withdrawing but finally agreed to adopt final guidelines without Full Scope Safeguards in 1977

# US-SOVIET COOPERATION: GERMAN EXPORTS TO BRAZIL

- ▶ West Germany initiated plans to export a full nuclear fuel cycle to Brazil in 1975
- ▶ US pressured Brazil, Germany, and IAEA to conclude a trilateral agreement to safeguard the deal
- ▶ Situation represented a “make or break” opportunity for nascent London Club
- ▶ US played a mediating role between Soviet and German delegations on sidelines of IAEA Board of Governors meetings

# FINDINGS FOR NONPROLIFERATION COOPERATION

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- Why did cooperation work?
  - USSR saw US as honest broker
  - USSR played “bad cop” in Group
  - History of productive cooperation already
  - Pressing proliferation threats made cooperation imperative