

was banned. Moreover, the Soviets, who had indicated earlier that they would support a ban, proposed that it also apply to cruise missile testing, to which the United States was flatly opposed.

- 5) Weapon inspection and tagging. Essentially, this was a proposal to conduct familiarization experiments in verifying the number of warheads on a missile — an unprecedented step in itself, which implied as well that Soviet inspectors would be entitled to board US ballistic missile submarines. Additionally, the two sides proposed to demonstrate missile tagging techniques using, at least in the case of the United States, epoxies containing reflective particles.
- 6) SLBMs. Finally, the parties agreed to address the problem of short-time-of-flight SLBMs. There has been a longstanding US concern about the vulnerability of its command and control and retaliatory forces to a surprise attack by ballistic missiles fired from Soviet SSBNs standing off the US coasts.

In addition to these measures, the Wyoming summit also produced a minor agreement, again following earlier proposals by the United States, to provide advance notification of one major strategic force exercise per year involving heavy bombers.

MALTA AND MOSCOW

Although on close examination the Wyoming meeting yielded less substantive progress than at first appeared — essentially the core problems of ALCMs, SLCMs, mobiles and strategic defences were not resolved — the meeting generated a mood of optimism that a START treaty was within sight, and could possibly be completed in time for the planned summit in the summer of 1990. Thereafter, however, the talks in Geneva resumed the familiar pattern of painfully slow negotiations. Between Wyoming and the proposed 1990 Washington summit, however, two further high level political meetings were intended to push the talks to a conclusion.

First, on 2 to 3 December 1989, Presidents Bush and Gorbachev held a mini-summit in Malta. Although no detailed proposals were discussed, the two sides agreed to accelerate the START process, and resolve all substantive details — if possible in time to sign a treaty at the 1990 summit. Specifically, Baker and Shevardnadze were mandated to meet early in 1990 and resolve three outstanding issues: ALCMs, telemetry encryption, and non-deployed missiles.

The Baker-Shevardnadze ministerial meeting took place in Moscow on 7 to 8 February 1990. Unlike the

meeting in Wyoming, however, press statements avoided detailed explanations of the agreements reached. On ALCMs, the ministerial communiqué merely noted “substantial progress,” although, as noted above, they still differed on the range of ALCMs to be included, with the United States continuing to press for 1,500 kilometres and the Soviet Union 600 kilometres. Informal accounts, however, indicated that the sides had agreed to two separate counting rules: ten ALCMs would be attributed to US bombers, and eight to Soviet bombers, with the Soviets allowed to deploy more ALCM bombers than the United States in order to compensate for their numerical inferiority.

Since US bombers can carry up to twenty cruise missiles, and Soviet bombers up to twelve, the effect of this agreement would be to exclude a significant number of strategic warheads from the treaty. This effect was reinforced, moreover, by the emerging arrangement in regard to SLCMs. The communiqué noted that SLCMs would be subject to separate, “politically binding” declarations for the duration of the START treaty, but did not specify the nature of the declarations. Informal accounts suggested that the parties would annually exchange production plans for SLCMs for a five year period, although they were not in agreement as to the range of missiles to be included in the declaration. The emerging agreement on SLCMs, therefore, confirmed the concession made by the Soviets in Wyoming. Whether or not the “politically binding” declaration included a ceiling on SLCMs, it was apparent that SLCMs would constitute a class of nuclear weapons also excluded from the 6,000-warhead limit.

Significant movement also occurred in regard to ballistic missiles. It was agreed that stored missiles tested in a mobile mode would be subject to limits, but that other non-deployed missiles would not be subject to the treaty. On encrypted telemetry, while the details were referred back to Geneva, the sides agreed to a ‘non-denial’ regime which would apply only to ballistic missiles, and not, as the Soviets had previously argued, to cruise missile tests as well.

With the prospect of one more ministerial meeting to precede the June summit in Washington, therefore, the sides emerged from the February meeting in Moscow with the START treaty in sight. Significant issues remained, such as limits on the deployment of mobile missiles, and the US proposal for a ban on the flight testing of heavy missiles. While there were few who believed, therefore, that a treaty would be ready for signature at the 1990 summit, the two sides seemed committed to reaching substantive agreement at the summit with a view to the completion of a treaty later in 1990.