

The Effect of Proposed American Reductions on Ballistic Missile Forces

Table 10

<u>Current US Strategic Ballistic Missile Forces</u>	
<u>Launchers</u>	<u>Warheads</u>
ICBM 1024	2124
SLBM 648	5760
<u>1672</u>	<u>7884</u>
<u>After Reduction: A Plausible US Force Structure</u>	
<u>Launcher Ceiling 1250</u>	<u>Warhead Ceiling 4500</u> (ICBM sub-ceiling 3,000)
450 Minuteman II (1 warhead)	450
300 Minuteman III 12A (3 warheads)	900
<u>(750)</u>	<u>(1350)</u>
48 Poseidon C3 (10 warheads/3 submarines)	480
336 Trident C4 (8 warheads/18 submarines)	2688
<u>(384)</u>	<u>(3168)</u>
Total: 1134	4518

Since the proposed American sub-ceiling of 3,000 warheads is on land-based missiles, the US would have no difficulty in observing the sub-ceiling. Nevertheless, the reductions pose considerable problems for the American strategic force posture. In order to meet both the warhead ceilings and to drive up the number of ICBM launchers, for example, the US might be forced to use the older, single warhead Minuteman IIs to make up most of its ICBM force instead of the triple warhead Minuteman IIIs. Despite maintaining the greater part of its forces at sea, the submarine force is reduced to 21 boats, which might well raise doubts about their vulnerability since it might then be assumed that only 8-10 submarines would be at sea in normal operations.

Finally, it will be noted that even using the Minuteman II, the US falls considerably short of the launcher ceiling allowed in their own proposal,