

with an agreement on the number allotted to each bomber. But statements arising from the negotiations suggest that there would be no obligation to restrict the number of ALCMs actually carried. First, there is little chance of verifying such an agreement, since peacetime checks would be meaningless insofar as nuclear bombers do not normally carry their ALCMs on training flights. Second, in public statements US defence officials made it clear that, in their view, it was reasonable to "discount" ALCMs because, unlike ICBMs, they could not be used in a disarming first strike and thus contributed to stability. Larger numbers, therefore, could be tolerated.

It is not clear that the Soviets accept this view, since the Moscow communiqué noted only that progress had been made in the area of ALCMs. The Soviets had continued to insist through the negotiations prior to the Moscow summit that the number of ALCMs allotted to each bomber be higher. Moreover, they continued to draw attention to the large reserve of US heavy bombers which, if unconstrained, would provide the USAF with greatly augmented nuclear capabilities. It seemed apparent that the progress noted was an agreement in principle to distinguish conventionally armed long-range ALCMs (not yet deployed but high on the list of US procurement priorities) from nuclear-armed ALCMs, and similarly to devise a means of marking those heavy bombers identified as nuclear, rather than conventional, weapons carriers.

SLCMs. The December communiqué had agreed in principle to limits on long-range SLCMs, but outside the 6,000-warhead ceiling. In subsequent negotiations the two sides remained far apart on this point. The Soviets pressed for a limit of 400 nuclear SLCMs on two designated types of submarine, later adding one type of surface ship. The United States continued to maintain that there was no effective means of verifying any such quota. The verification problem is compounded, moreover, by the need to distinguish conventional from nuclear SLCMs. The US Navy, for example, plans to deploy between 3,000 and 4,000 SLCMs, of which about 800 would be nuclear armed. Although the Soviet Union offered a number of possibilities for distinguishing conventional from nuclear SLCMs, including a joint experiment to test the practicality of distinguishing a ship with nuclear SLCMs from a neighbouring ship carrying conventional SLCMs without on-board inspection, the US Navy remained unconvinced. In mid-1988 it was still not evident that the two sides had moved closer to a solution to the verification problem.

If a quota of around 800 SLCMs were assumed, however, the combination of SLCMs and non-accountable bomber-delivered weapons would move the actual total of strategic weapons close to 9,000 rather than the 6,000 formula agreed in the negotiations.

Mobile Missiles

The US draft treaty of 8 May 1987 proposed a complete

ban on mobile missiles. The US position, relatively unchanged since the fall of 1985, was that mobile missiles could not be verified, and constituted a potentially destabilizing opportunity to circumvent the requirement for strictly observed ceilings on ICBMs. As indicated above, the Soviets view mobile ICBMs as a guard against the potential vulnerability of the SS-18s and other silo-based missiles. Predictably, in their draft treaty of 31 July 1987, the Soviets proposed that mobile missiles be permitted.

Disagreement on this issue has continued throughout the current negotiations. On the US side, the negotiators have relented somewhat on an outright ban by agreeing to consider the inclusion of strict numerical limits on mobile missiles if they can be persuaded that effective verification is feasible. After the December summit the Soviets made various proposals for tracking mobile missiles, and at a February meeting between Shultz and Shevardnadze progress appeared possible. The wording of a joint statement indicated that Soviet officials had suggested that, for the most part, mobile missiles would be confined to base areas where they could be easily counted.

The Moscow summit talks chaired by Paul Nitze and Marshal Akhromeyev went some considerable way to further resolving the mobile issue. Following the summit, however, the official US summary of remaining issues noted that there were a number of significant issues outstanding, and stressed that "the devil remains in the detail."

Modernization

In contrast to the INF Treaty, which banned a complete range of weapon types, the respective START proposals, with the exception of the US suggestion that mobile missiles be banned, permit all existing strategic delivery systems and allow both sides to modernize or replace weapons within the ceilings imposed by the agreement. Spokesmen for the United States have cited the difficulties experienced in the SALT negotiations as grounds for deciding not to address the issue of modernization. The Soviets do not appear to have commented on this issue.

For the Soviets, this permits them to continue the development of the SS-X-26 and SS-X-27 ICBMs, the SS-NX-24 SLCM, the *Blackjack* bomber, the AS-X-16 SRAM, and an advanced cruise missile reported to be in the development stage. The United States will be permitted to develop the rail-mobile MX (assuming the US is not confounded by its own proposal for a ban on mobile missiles), the *Midgetman* ICBM, the *Trident* D-5 SLBM, the B-2 stealth bomber, the advanced cruise missile, and the SRAM II. Both sides will be entitled to develop new warheads for these systems.

This list of strategic weapons systems under development or in the early stages of deployment indicates that, with or without START, both sides had intended to restructure their forces in the five to seven years that it will take to implement a START agreement. Nevertheless, the