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Summit Gets Mixed Score

Clouded by Watergate

By Murrey Marder

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DUSSELDORF, West Germany, July 3 —The American-Soviet summit that ended in Moscow today produced a mixed score of modest successes and distinct setbacks to higher hopes, under circumstances without precedent in U.S. foreign policy.

As Secretary of State Henry Kissinger arrived a few hours after the final signing ceremony in the Kremlin, a senior American official supplied an assessment that is likely to be closer to the Nixon administration's private one than any public claim.

It was no mean accomplishment, he said, to hold to the course of detente under the conditions that exist in the United States.

The official was referring obliquely to President Nixon. This threat was inextricably entwined in the negotiating strategy on both sides, although both would deny it. No American president ever has engaged in high-stake international diplomacy under such a cloud.

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Support by Military

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Defense Secretary James R. Schlesinger said yesterday he fully supports the new arms control agreements reached at the Moscow summit, and he rejected suggestions that the Pentagon or U.S. military commanders may have stood in the way of reaching much more significant accords.

At a Pentagon news conference, Schlesinger was asked about post-summit remarks in Moscow by Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger suggesting that "both sides have to convince their military establishments of the benefits of restraint, and that does not come easily to either side."

Kissinger, in turn, had spoken after Soviet Communist Party chief Leonid I. Brezhnev, on Tuesday night, said he thought the new nuclear arms agreement might have been broader.

Schlesinger stressed that neither the

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The week-long Moscow summit talks were in fact a four-party negotiation: between President Nixon and his military establishment, between Soviet Communist Party leader Leonid Brezhnev and his military establishment, finally between the President and Brezhnev.

Kissinger virtually said so aloud at an early morning press conference in Moscow, in a wry touch of public candor that is rare in diplomacy.

"My impression from what I have observed is that both sides have to convince their military establishments of the benefits of restraint and that that is not a thought that comes naturally to military people on either side," Kissinger said dryly.

Kissinger arrived in Dusseldorf tonight directly from Moscow for a few hours of relaxation at the World Cup soccer semi-finals at nearby Dortmund, before beginning a tour of North Atlantic capitals to report on the summit.

Ironically, it is Kissinger's view that the failure of the United States and the Soviet Union to make greater progress at the summit should ease the unresolved battle inside the Nixon administration over nuclear arms control strategy.

If the Soviet Union had been more responsive to U.S. proposals for controlling multiple nuclear warheads, there would have been greater controversy in Washington over initiatives taken by the President, it was acknowledged. This is because President Nixon left Washington without an agreed, government position on what he should propose at the Moscow summit.

Kissinger insisted the night before the presidential party arrived in Moscow that the President would "not be inhibited at the summit by his domestic problems."

In effect, what high Nixon administration officials are now saying privately is that Washington over nuclear it was not the debate in controls that inhibited the negotiations, but the combined caution of the Soviet and American military establishments.

Spread throughout Kissinger's Moscow press conference today were warnings of the mutual danger in the pursuit of military "superiority" by either the Russians or the Americans in a nuclear age.

Kissinger exclaimed at one point: "One of the questions which we have to ask ourselves as a country is what in the name of God is strategic superiority? What is the significance of it, politically, militarily, operationally, at these level of numbers? What do you do with it?"

Kissinger continues to insist that there is no clash between him and Defense Secretary James Schlesinger on

their basic perceptions about nuclear arms limitations. Neither will be in office in any event, a senior official noted, when the strategic approaches they advocate come to fruition.

It would appear, that on several central issues in the summit, it was the strategy advocated by the American Joint Chiefs of Staff and defended by Schlesinger which prevailed, rather than Kissinger's.

Either because of the Soviet demands or the American military's position, or both, President Nixon emerged from the summit with protection on his political right flank, a major factor in the impeachment challenge hanging over him.

Emerging from Moscow uncommitted to any bold new initiative on nuclear controls, Mr. Nixon is considerably less exposed to warnings by policy critics that he might be lured into a "sellout."

A senior American official and Soviet sources in Moscow both acknowledged that an American proposal for controlling multiple nuclear warheads had been made, and was rejected by the Soviet Union. Soviet sources implied that the proposal was spurned before the summit began.

The objective of the American offer was to agree on a ceiling figure for multiple warheads giving an advantage to the United States, which holds a commanding lead in this field, in return for a Soviet advantage in total numbers of missile launchers.

The U.S. purpose was to strike a balance that would prevent the Soviet Union from putting enough multiple warheads on its larger missiles to overtake the United States.

Neither side disclosed the key factor: the numbers of warheads or launchers proposed as a trade-off. Without the numbers, it is not possible to judge whether the U.S. demands or the Russian counter demands were too high to permit bargaining.

Kissinger left the implication that the military on both sides were demanding too much. This, in turn, raised the question of whether President Nixon was too weakened by the Watergate and the impeachment challenge to risk the wrath of the American military and their allies in Congress to put a more venturesome proposal to the Soviet Union.

That was the conclusion reached by the Soviet Union, several Soviet sources said. A senior American official indirectly appeared to support that implication by stating that the record of progress in arms control shows that movement depends on American initiatives. Not all Americans strategists agree with that contention.

In their summit bargaining, an American source said, both President Nixon and Brezhnev found that their military establish-

ments were presenting them with "worst case" arguments, each basing its demands on the highest possible combination of nuclear deployment that could be imagined.

The American source said the U.S. delegation initially regarded as incredible the Soviet military claims of what the United States might be able to achieve against the Soviet Union with present American military superiority. But on checking with U.S. military planners, it was said, the American delegation was surprised to find the Soviet claims of American military capabilities to be plausible.

This exchange was reported to have had a strong impact on many U.S. officials including Alexander M. Haig Jr., the president's

chief of staff, a retired four-star general and Kissinger's former deputy director of the National Security Council.

Kissinger in Moscow described these exchanges as "the most extensive discussions at that level of the arms race that had ever taken place . . . with an amount of detail that would have been considered violating intelligence codes in previous periods."

Kissinger now plans to return to Moscow in September or October, but more likely October, to pursue the negotiations. It is said to be his hope that within the next two months the differences within the U.S. government can be settled and a new start can be made on launching substantive nuclear negotiations.

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Defense Department nor the uniformed military had impeded additional agreements. "We have firm civilian control in this country," he said, adding that no agreement had been proposed by the Soviets that was acceptable to Kissinger but which had been vetoed by Schlesinger or the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Asked if he felt Kissinger was really talking about the power of the Soviet military to thwart concessions and just added "both sides" as a diplomatic nicety, Schlesinger said he couldn't elaborate further, but "there's no problem here."

Schlesinger was joined at the Pentagon news conference by Dr. Fred Ikle, director of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. Both officials said they felt the agreements that were reached, to limit underground nuclear tests to a 150-kiloton level and to reduce the number of anti-ballistic missile (ABM) sites to one for each country were significant steps.

Though no firm agreement was reached to limit deployment of MIRV-type multiple warhead missiles, Schlesinger warned against becoming impatient with the pace of arms control.

"It is a fragile development that must be treated with great care, and anything that can sustain the dialogue is a desirable development," he said. Referring to the agreements that were signed and the prospect of renewed MIRV negotiations, next month, he said "there are concrete steps, useful in and of them-

selves, and they should be endorsed by the American people."

In an effort to dispel reports of a widening split within the administration over how to deal with the Soviets in the Watergate environment, Schlesinger said the administration managed to put together "an agreement within the government regarding the general approach to be taken in Moscow" before the President departed.

The partial underground test ban treaty does not go into effect for 21 months, and Schlesinger conceded that this would no doubt permit the Soviets to complete proof-testing their new 1- to 2-megaton warheads for their new MIRVs. A megaton is equivalent to 1 million tons of TNT.

He also said it would allow the United States to complete such developments as a new warhead for the Trident and Minuteman missiles and for new bomber-carried weapons.

But both officials maintained that the new agreement would eventually constrain both sides from developing still newer large weapons and would eventually prevent the Soviets from further "optimizing" their large missile payload advantage by putting many more small warheads on them.

The new 150-kiloton limit on underground tests is seen more as a political move than a military one. Few weapons being tested today by either the United States or the Soviet Union run higher than 150 kilotons, which is the equivalent of 150,000 tons of TNT.

In 1972 and 1973, the United States conducted 14 underground atomic tests in the Nevada desert. Only one was more than 150 kilotons. Seven tests were less than 20 kilotons, suggesting that most of the emphasis in the U.S. program was on miniaturizing its weapons rather than building them up.

The Soviets had 27 underground tests in the same period, six of them greater in force than 150 kilotons. One Soviet test in 1972 was in

the megaton range. Another last year was in the 3- to 6-megaton range, meaning almost surely that it was a test of the Soviet ABM warhead.

Almost all the U.S. underground tests in the megaton range the last six years were related to the ABM warhead. The largest was

the 5-megaton Cannikin test in 1971 under the Alaskan island of Amchitka, which was a combined "proof and effects" test of the ABM warhead.

Weapons experts insist there is nothing magic about the 150-kiloton limit. One source said it was simply the "negotiated" number, meaning it was the force that both the United States and the Soviet Union felt they can live with when the treaty goes into effect.

At the same time, the threshold of 150 kilotons allows both nations to test the effects of nuclear weapons a lot larger than 150 kilotons against a variety of imagined defenses. The reason is that an explosion of 150 kilotons gives effects that, as one source put it, can be "extrapolated out a lot higher than 150 kilotons."

Another reason for the agreed-on limit of 150 kilotons is that its size allows for numerous test effects to be built into each test. Smaller tests limit the number of experiments weapons makers can perform.

There are at least two political reasons for the agreement to limit tests to 150 kilotons. One is to show the rest of the world that the two superpowers are moving in the direction of a full test ban, movement that might encourage other nations to sign the non-proliferation treaty forbidding the spread of nuclear weapons.

The other reason more closely involves the United States and the Soviet Union. This is to allow both coun-

tries to gather seismic information about the other's tests, so that each country will feel secure that the other is not cheating on the 150-kiloton limit.

The agreement even calls for calibration shots, which means each country will tell the other ahead of time what kind of test it is conducting, precisely where it is conducting it, how deep in the ground and in what kind of soil or rock.

Schlesinger made it clear that in his view it was the "gross" and "disproportionate" increases now planned in the Soviet missile program that were the principal obstacles to achieving more comprehensive missile agreements that maintained "essential equivalence" in nuclear strike power.

Schlesinger said the Pentagon has repeatedly stressed the desirability of restraint.

"The further expansion of strategic capability on both

sides serves no purpose . . . it is not necessary, in fact, those levels already reached are perhaps unnecessarily high," he said.

Still, Schlesinger referred once again to the political problem of "perception" of each nation's nuclear forces, even if differences don't mean much militarily. Thus, he stressed, the United States "could not live with" a Soviet attempt to completely MIRV all of their replacement missile forces over the next six to eight years.

Under questioning, Schlesinger also rejected the idea that the military may have been used as an excuse for not reaching an agreement on MIRV due to other reasons.

He said that not only had both sides failed to agree on the details of how a MIRV limitation would work, but that there was still no adequate conceptual understanding of the overall strategic issues for both sides to move ahead with new agreements.

It has been known for some time that the Soviets would allow some advantages to the United States in the numbers of MIRV missiles, but since the Soviet missiles are so much larger than the U.S. counterparts, the difference would have to be significant and thus far, officials say, the Soviets will not make such concessions.

Schlesinger said he regretted this situation and hoped that in the future the strategic nuclear forces of both sides could be limited.

Though Schlesinger has frequently been pictured as a hawk on the question of arms control measures, he has generally let it be known that he does not oppose any potential MIRV agreement at this time as long as it includes some Soviet concessions.

Schlesinger and other civilian officials have also let it be known that the Soviets were acting very tough in the arms talks and seemed to feel that events were going their way and thus did not have to make major concessions at this time.

The intent, from the start has been to get the Soviets to agree to limit the number of new missiles equipped with MIRV that are used as replacements for their existing 1,500 missile land-based ICBM force.