
SINGLE-SHOT, CONDITIONAL UNILATERAL ARMS CONTROL INITIATIVES: LESSONS FROM SIX CASES

WILLIAM M. ROSE

Arms proliferation is one of the most critical issues facing nations today. Using US-Soviet negotiations over nuclear weapons as a model, Professor William M. Rose offers prescriptions for reining in arms races. He concludes that single-shot unilateral initiatives can provide the key in advancing settlements to regulate proliferation or abolish dangerous weapons systems.

On September 27, 1991, US President George Bush boldly announced plans to unilaterally eliminate tactical nuclear weapons on land and at sea, cancel development of mobile versions of the MX and Midgetman intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), and remove from alert status all strategic bombers as well as part of the ICBM force. He called on the Soviet Union to respond in kind. Bush also offered to eliminate jointly with the Soviets land-based multiple-warhead ICBMs and asked to renegotiate the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty to permit deployment of a non-nuclear ABM system that could protect against limited missile attacks.

One week later Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev directly reciprocated, promising to eliminate ground- and sea-based tactical nuclear weapons. He removed heavy bombers and ICBMs from battle-alert status. Gorbachev also agreed to keep deployed land-mobile missiles in their garrisons and to stop development of a new mobile missile. Finally he added his own unilateral initiative:

We declare that as of today we have imposed a unilateral moratorium on nuclear tests for the period of one year. We're hoping that this example will be followed by the other nuclear powers, and in this way a road will be opened up for earliest and complete cessation of all nuclear tests.¹

1. "Gorbachev's Remarks on Arms Cuts," *The New York Times*, 6 October 1991, 12.

William M. Rose is an Associate Professor in the Department of Government at Connecticut College. He would like to thank Bennett Ramberg, Nina Tannenwald, and Robert Woito for their thoughtful comments and suggestions.

Bush's package of unilateral initiatives elicited matching Soviet restraint, yet Gorbachev's test ban initiative failed to compel US reciprocation. Bush also rejected the Soviet leader's call to eliminate all tactical nuclear weapons since he wanted to retain air-launched missiles in Europe. Although Gorbachev expressed interest in discussing the limited ABM proposal, he wavered on banning multiple-warhead missiles as long as the United States maintained an advantage in such submarine-based missiles.

This interchange illustrates that unilateral initiatives can help advance timely agreements to control or eliminate weapons. It also reveals the bargaining tactic's limitations: some initiatives fail, and even those that are reciprocated may not lead to agreement on all accompanying proposals. Gaining policy-relevant knowledge about when and how to use initiatives successfully requires learning the conditions under which they succeed. A unilateral arms control initiative is an action of military restraint, undertaken without prior agreement by another country to reciprocate that restraint. Its purpose is to induce the other country to reciprocate or otherwise act in a confidence- or security-building manner. Because the tactic involves concrete deeds, it indicates more commitment to developing a cooperative relationship than words alone. The stratagem is a form of tacit, informal bargaining—although it could be used in conjunction with traditional negotiations.

Other variations are possible, but this paper focuses on single-shot, conditional initiatives used in convincing another state to exercise mutual restraint in an arms race. Single shot means that an initiative is not part of a package or sequence of initiatives. By concentrating on the control of an arms race, the paper precludes examination of other types of initiatives, such as those intended to improve political relations or alter the target country's economic or political systems.²

Three criteria were used to narrow the discussion.³ The evidence consists of

-
2. For ideas about how clusters of both conditional and unconditional initiatives could help overcome psychological barriers to reaching agreements, see Robert Osgood, *An Alternative to War and Surrender* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1962). The actual impact of cooperative gestures on political relations between countries is the focus of an excellent study by John Freeman and Joshua Goldstein: *Three-Way Street: Strategic Reciprocity in World Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990). Sequences of conditional unilateral initiatives, implemented in a "tit-for-tat" manner (where the next initiative is undertaken only after the first is reciprocated), can be used to modify the behavior of a state, see Robert Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation* (New York: Basic Books, 1984). For a discussion of how initiatives can be used for a range of objectives including altering a target country's political or economic policy, see Robert Woito, *To End War* (New York: Pilgram Press, 1982), 495-502.
 3. One criterion is that the state implementing a conditional initiative explicitly announced the sort of reciprocation it desired. This bypasses unconditional initiatives and unilateral restraint undertaken for non-bargaining purposes, so that we avoid lumping together several types of restraint and hence miss the opportunity to evaluate the utility of the individual categories. Another criterion is a focus on Soviet responses to US initiatives, so that complex factors favoring successful initiatives are operationalized from the perspective of only one country. Because this relationship is of obvious importance to US foreign policy, moreover, a sufficient number of sources was available. Finally, the proposed restraint involved a weapon or weapon component directly related to the balance of power, which focuses attention on the relative importance of security considerations vis-a-vis other factors favoring successful initiatives. For

six case studies of single-shot, conditional US unilateral arms control initiatives directed towards the USSR between 1962 and 1978.

- In September 1962, to encourage the Soviets to ban orbiting nuclear weapons, the United States announced it would continue to refrain from launching such weapons into space. This restriction was conditional on the Soviets' continued restraint. The Soviets agreed to the ban in September 1963.
- In January 1963, hoping to gain Soviet agreement on a verifiable Comprehensive Test Ban (CTB) Treaty, President Kennedy postponed a planned series of underground tests. When the initiative failed to secure Soviet concessions to permit on-site inspection, the United States resumed testing.
- The next June, to promote a Limited Test Ban (LTB) treaty, Kennedy declared that the United States would not conduct nuclear tests in the atmosphere as long as the Soviets did not. A few days later the Soviets reciprocated, and in a month the parties signed a treaty banning all but underground tests.
- During 1964 and 1965, the United States unsuccessfully tried to use plans to phase out the B-47 bomber to induce the Soviets to destroy an equal number of their TU-16 bombers.
- In January 1967, President Johnson tried to convince the Soviets to negotiate limits to offensive and defensive strategic weapons and to halt deployment of their ABM system. He delayed funding for the deployment of a US ABM system, but the Soviets did not respond positively until the United States threatened to end its restraint in 1968. Then the Soviets partially complied with US demands by agreeing to discuss arms limitations and by halting construction of the Moscow ABM site.
- In April 1978, President Carter announced deferral of neutron bomb production but linked the moratorium to Soviet reduction of conventional or nuclear forces in Central Europe. The initiative failed.

Although only a few cases led to reciprocal Soviet restraint, a systematic comparison of both successes and failures provides conditions that result in agreement.⁴ Explaining Soviet responses to US initiatives requires that many key factors, such as calculations about military consequences of reciprocation, be considered from a Soviet perspective. The favorable conditions are presented in general terms that can be applied to any countries involved in an arms race.

a listing of cases which were omitted, see William M. Rose, *U.S. Unilateral Arms Control Initiatives: When Do They Work?* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1988), 163-196, nn.41-43. Since Bush's 1991 initiatives were part of a package of initiatives, explaining Gorbachev's responses is a task for another study.

4. Research for this article relies heavily on Alexander George's "method of structured, focused comparison." See Alexander George, "Case Studies and Theory Development," in *Diplomatic History: New Approaches in History, Theory, and Policy*, ed. P.G. Lauren (New York: Free Press, 1979).

Conditions Favoring Successful Initiatives

The six cases suggest that effective implementation requires attention to eight conditions, which are presented here in prescriptive form. One focuses on the bargaining process; five involve the target country's cost-benefit calculations about the military, political, and economic consequences of their response; and two concern aspects of the domestic and international environments of bargaining—bureaucratic politics and the level of international tension.⁵ The most important condition pertains to security calculations.

Success may not require that all conditions be met. A country might not be able or even want to follow all the guidelines. Subsequent research might lead to additional or modified conditions. But meeting these guidelines will maximize the probability of successful single-shot, conditional unilateral arms control initiatives.

1. A country implementing an initiative should signal its demands and commitments in a clear, complete and consistent fashion. When possible, bargaining moves should be in the "same currency" (i.e., the type of initial restraint should be similar in form to the type of reciprocation desired). To avoid missed or misperceived signals, soon after the initiative is implemented feedback should be sought about how the target country interpreted the initiative.

Signalling is intended to influence the other country's calculations so that state will expect net advantages to accompany reciprocation. Yet if messages are misinterpreted or missed, success may be elusive. The most obvious instance where the Soviet Union failed to grasp the meaning of important US signals occurred during the first year of negotiations on orbiting nuclear weapons. In September 1962, the United States said it would continue to forgo orbiting such weapons as long as the Soviets did the same. Although US missives about its demands and commitments were clear and consistent, they were incomplete. The Soviets mistakenly thought the proposal contained two additional conditions which they opposed—on-site inspection and restraints on ballistic missiles—so they did not announce reciprocation. Apparently they missed the signals in United Nations representative Albert Gore's speech given several months after the initiative was first announced. Gore explicitly discussed "a provision against the placing of weapons of mass destruction *into orbit*." He called on the parties to "do everything now that can be done *to avoid* an arms race in outer space," and said, "it should be easier to agree now not to arm a part of the environment that has *never been armed* than later to agree to disarm parts that have been armed"(emphasis added).⁶

5. All but the first factor involves analysis of Soviet perceptions, national interests, domestic politics, or a combination. Without access to reliable accounts of internal Soviet decisionmaking, the degree of certainty about these factors is less high than otherwise. To explain these latter seven aspects of Soviet responses, I relied on a combination of plausible deductive arguments and circumstantial evidence.

6. US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA), *Documents on Disarmament, 1962 II* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1963), 1122.

Not until a year after announcing its initiative did Washington explicitly repudiate the disputed conditions. Veteran Soviet diplomat Igor Usachev met with Raymond Garthoff, a high-level official in the Kennedy administration, and explained his assumption that the US proposal involved the controversial links. Garthoff speculated that the Soviets incorrectly believed this initiative was a variation of an earlier US proposal to ban all objects "sent through outer space."⁷ When Garthoff assured him otherwise, Usachev expressed interest in the deal.⁸ Two weeks after the Garthoff/Usachev meeting, Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko announced that the Soviet Union would reciprocate.⁹ The coincidence of the meeting and Gromyko's announcement suggests a causal relationship between clear and complete diplomatic communications and a successful initiative. Earlier US efforts to seek feedback might have produced reciprocation sooner.

In the successful LTB case, US signals were clear, complete and consistent. Kennedy halted US atmospheric nuclear tests and called on the Soviets to reciprocate and to sign a treaty prohibiting such tests. The Soviets received and correctly interpreted US signals, and within a week announced they would refrain from testing. After a month of talks, the parties signed the Limited Test Ban Treaty.

Johnson extended a carrot to encourage Soviet cooperation by not immediately deploying the US ABM. He brandished the stick with a request for funds to start deployment if the Soviets failed to reciprocate.

In contrast, bargaining during the unsuccessful neutron bomb case involved different weapons (i.e., different "currencies"), reducing the political costs of Soviet non-reciprocation. Carter had linked US restraint in neutron bomb deployment to Soviet concessions in either conventional forces or intermediate-range nuclear forces. From a propaganda perspective, Soviet General Secretary Brezhnev rightly accused the United States of "tying in this weapon with unrelated issues."¹⁰

Finally, the ABM case is interesting because the outcomes expected to accompany clear and then unclear signalling did not occur. As discussion of Soviet cost-benefit calculations will show, net assessment of security consequences of reciprocation and non-reciprocation was more important than the signals. This case shows that careful signalling, although usually important, is not a sufficient

7. Raymond L. Garthoff, "Banning the Bomb in Outer Space," *International Security* Vol. 5 (1980-1981): 31.

8. *Ibid.*, 33-34.

9. US ACDA, *Documents on Disarmament*, 1963, 523.

10. US ACDA, *Documents on Disarmament*, 1978, 232-33.

condition for success. This is also the only case where security calculations and bureaucratic interests—the two most important factors—lead one to expect an opposite outcome than what occurred.

In the mid-1960s the Soviet Union was in the early stages of deploying an ABM system. Initially, the United States responded by announcing deployment of penetration aids. Saturating the Soviet ABM system would allow the United States to retaliate after a Soviet attack. But in his budget message to Congress on January 24, 1967, Johnson declared the conditional curtailment of funding for ABM deployment. He said the United States would:

Continue intensive development of Nike-X but take no action now to deploy an ABM defense; initiate discussions with the Soviet Union on the limitation of ABM deployments; in the event these discussions prove unsuccessful, we will reconsider our deployment decision. To provide for actions that may be required at that time, approximately \$375 million has been included in the 1968 budget for the production of Nike-X for such purposes as defense of our offensive weapon systems.¹¹

Johnson extended a carrot to encourage Soviet cooperation by not immediately deploying the US ABM. He brandished the stick with a request for funds to start deployment if the Soviets failed to reciprocate.¹² This pronouncement was soon followed by similar statements from US Defense Secretary Robert McNamara and US Ambassador to the Soviet Union Llewellyn Thompson.¹³

Despite clear and consistent US signals, the Soviets refused to reciprocate.¹⁴ Faced with Soviet disinterest and domestic pressures in the United States for deployment, Johnson decided that some US ABM deployment was required. Conflicting US signals followed.¹⁵ McNamara and other administration officials said the ABM would target Chinese missiles, not threaten the Soviets. This contradicted statements by several senators and the Joint Chiefs of Staff that the ABMs would be directed at the Soviet Union.

In 1968, when Congress finally funded the administration's request to begin production and deployment of an ABM, the Soviets changed their tune—despite the lack of clarity about the ABM's mission. On June 28, Gromyko said the Soviet Union was ready to enter into talks to discuss defensive and offensive

11. US ACDA, *Disarmament Document Series, Selected Statements by President Johnson on Disarmament and Related Matters, July 1, 1966 - June 30, 1967* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1967), 47.

12. Implementing the threat aspect of the unilateral initiative tactic coincided with using the bargaining chip tactic. For a discussion of the surprising connection between the two tactics, see Rose, 139-140.

13. US ACDA, *Documents on Disarmament, 1967*, 7, 11.

14. *Ibid.*, 60, 270; and John Newhouse, *Cold Dawn: The Story of SALT* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973), 89-94.

15. US ACDA, *Documents on Disarmament, 1967*, 382-405, 454-459; Newhouse, 96-98; and Morton Halperin, *Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institute, 1974), 3, 326, 302.

weapons.¹⁶ Although the Soviets did not declare a deployment moratorium, their behavior was consistent with their verbal interest in restraint. In August 1968, US satellites detected curtailment of work on the remaining Soviet ABM site near Moscow, which was two-thirds completed.¹⁷ Although we cannot know for sure that conciliatory Soviet statements and actions were directly related to US bargaining moves, circumstantial evidence suggests a correlation.

2. Reciprocation should not lead to a decline in a state's military security and, if possible, it should enhance the security of both countries.

Explaining Soviet policy change requires examination of the Soviets' changing cost-benefit calculations about the security consequences of reciprocation. This analysis makes the standard assumption that for the period of the case studies, the Khrushchev and Brezhnev era, Soviet perceptions of reciprocation's impact on defense were predominantly influenced by the prevailing military doctrine. But if current trends continue and Soviet (or Russian) society gains strength relative to the state, then doctrine would offer less reliable guideposts on the formation of strategy and preferred weapons or arms control proposals.¹⁸ Such issues require consideration when explaining or predicting a state's response to a unilateral initiative. The six cases suggest that security calculations were the most important factor influencing Soviet responses to US initiatives. When military wisdom conflicted with other values or circumstances, the outcome was always consistent with major defense criteria.

Although several revisions of doctrine occurred during these years, some aspects of nuclear doctrine endured. This included a goal to achieve and then retain assured retaliation capability, and to be able to limit damage to the homeland should war occur. Ballistic missiles were the preferred means to carry out these objectives. The Soviets sought both goals when the objectives did not conflict, but priority was given to the assured retaliation mission.¹⁹ In addition, achieving and, after 1968, retaining parity was paramount. Still some political and military leaders continued to call for superiority until 1976 when parity became the official objective. The Soviets were years away from Gorbachev's call for a "mutual security" approach to military doctrine.

In the outer space case, no direct evidence reveals Soviet calculations about the military consequences of their responses to initiatives. However, orbiting weapons likely promised few security gains and presented definite security costs to the Soviets. The Soviets may have agreed with Cyrus Vance's 1967 testimony as Deputy Secretary of Defense:

16. Newhouse, 98-103.

17. Thomas W. Wolfe, *Soviet Power in Europe, 1945-1970* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1970), 441; and Samuel B. Payne, Jr., *The Soviet Union and SALT* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1980), 19-20.

18. Matthew Evangelista, *Innovation and the Arms Race: How the United States and the Soviet Union Develop New Military Technologies* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1988), Chapter 3.

19. Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, "Soviets on Nuclear War-Fighting," *Problems of Communism* Vol. 35 (1985): 68-79; and Jack Snyder, "Science and Sovietology: Bridging the Methods Gap in Soviet Foreign Policy Studies," *World Politics* Vol. 40 (1988): 182.

Our studies show that these systems have technical and economic drawbacks in addition to safety and command disadvantages. They would, if deployed now, be inaccurate, costly and dangerous, and they would be less effective than present ICBM systems.²⁰

Such weapons also would have created longer-term security problems for the Soviets, since the United States would have responded with an anti-satellite system and perhaps its own orbiting nuclear weapons.²¹

However, for a year after the United States first proposed the initiative other security calculations carried more weight. Recall that the Soviets mistakenly thought the United States wanted to limit ballistic missiles. This would have inhibited their ability to reach strategic parity and to accomplish retaliation and damage-limitation missions. Once the misconception was cleared, Soviet security calculations favored reciprocation.

Consistent with conventional wisdom about Soviet arms control policy during the Khrushchev and Brezhnev era, the Soviets did not reciprocate any US initiatives which they thought required on-site inspection.

The Soviet desire to gain the US level of strategic power, or to improve or maintain the ability to carry out doctrinal missions were key reasons behind the other failures. In response to Johnson's January 1967 ABM initiative, Premier Aleksey Kosygin touted the practical and moral value of ABMs in limiting damage from nuclear war.²² Soviet defector Arkady Shevchenko implied that optimism about a Soviet ABM prevailed among most political and military leaders during 1967, but the Soviets became interested in limitations when their system "proved less effective than anticipated."²³

In mid-1968, when the Soviets first indicated serious interest in ABM limitations, they probably realized that their ABM would not work well when saturated by multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles (MIRVs) on US missiles. In the months after the September 1967 US announcement of MIRVs, the Soviet press seemed to downplay the promise of the ABMs.²⁴ Soviet leaders also faced the prospect of a superior US ABM. The Soviets preferred to compete

20. US Congress, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations Hearings, *Treaty on Outer Space*, 90th Cong., 1st sess., 7, 13 March and 12 April 1967 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1967), 79.

21. Gerald M. Steinberg, *Satellite Reconnaissance: The Role of Informal Bargaining* (New York: Praeger, 1983), 30-35, 71-87.

22. Newhouse, 89-94.

23. Arkady N. Shevchenko, *Breaking with Moscow* (New York: Knopf, 1985), 201-202.

24. Sayer Stevens, "Soviet Ballistic Missile Defense Program," in *Ballistic Missile Defense* ed. A. Carter and D. Schwartz (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institute, 1984), 201.

with the United States in areas where they were less inferior technologically, such as in ballistic missiles.²⁵ Worst-case analysis would lead them to expect the new US ABM to be directed at them. This appraisal, combined with the knowledge of US prowess in computer technology and other key ingredients in ABMs, would have led Soviets to doubt their missiles' ability either to limit damage to the Soviet Union or to carry out a crushing retaliation. By mid-1968, when the US commitment to deploy some sort of ABM was clear, these concerns about US MIRVs and an ABM competition likely disposed them to comply with US demands.

3. Verification mechanisms should be mutually acceptable.

Consistent with conventional wisdom about Soviet arms control policy during the Khrushchev and Brezhnev era, the Soviets did not reciprocate any US initiatives which they thought required on-site inspection. Conversely, successful initiatives were verifiable with "national technical means" that did not require on-site inspection. But Soviet opposition to on-site inspection was not absolute. In negotiations over a CTB in 1962, the Soviets said they would permit two or three inspections of suspected test sites per year.²⁶ The United States insisted on more than twice as many. So several months after the US CTB initiative Khrushchev responded with a traditional explanation for opposing more than a few (if any) on-site inspections:

The Western Governments advanced their terms on a certain number of inspections for the conclusion of a test ban agreement. What do they want? Essentially, they want Soviet territory to be opened to spies from NATO military headquarters.²⁷

Under Gorbachev, the Soviets have become less paranoid about military secrecy and have accepted on-site inspection when an agreement they desired required it. Taking into account changes in Soviet perspectives on verification, the prescription that "means of verification should be mutually acceptable" is necessarily vague. For a given initiative, a state's perspective on inspection may vary with time as well as with the issue. But at the very least, these concerns should be considered when implementing initiatives.

4. Reciprocating an initiative should, when possible, affirm norms of reciprocity and equal status.

Political prestige, like the other non-security factors, is especially important when military calculations are irrelevant or ambiguous. Reciprocity is affirmed when a proposal would require one state to give up no more defense capabilities than the other, as well as when it affirms the norm of equal status.²⁸ Both the

25. Robert Einhorn, *Negotiating from Strength: Leverage in U.S.-Soviet Arms Control Negotiations* (New York: Praeger, 1985), 15-16, 44.

26. US ACDA, *Documents on Disarmament, 1962 II*, 1300-1301.

27. US ACDA, *Documents on Disarmament, 1963*, 226.

CTB and LTB proposals involved reciprocal concessions, but only the latter affirmed the norm of equal status. A CTB would have constrained the Soviet quest for strategic parity by hampering its ability to improve the yield-to-weight ratios of missile warheads. In contrast, the LTB permitted underground testing and had little impact on Soviet security calculations. In 1962, the Soviets said underground testing was giving them "not inconsiderable results."²⁹ The next year they added, "We would never have agreed to the conclusion of such a (LTB) treaty if it placed us in an unequal position."³⁰

Neither supportive condition occurred in the bomber case. First, the exchange was not reciprocal. Semen Tsarapkin, Soviet representative to the UN disarmament talks, noted:

It is after all common knowledge that the United States B-47 bomber is an obsolete weapon, and that the United States government long ago took the decision to withdraw it from service.³¹

Since the Soviet TU-16s were still a vital part of the Soviet arsenal, destruction of equal numbers would not have been an equal exchange.³² Second, the proposal would have lowered further the Soviets' already inferior nuclear status—hardly an affirmation of equal status.

5. Reciprocation should not undermine the relative power of a state's alliance network.

A country's security, influence, and ideological objectives may be affected by political relations with and among third countries as well as by the state implementing an initiative. In the case studies, the Soviet Union had a political interest in minimizing the cohesion of political-military relations among its adversaries and in maximizing the cohesion of its own alliance network. As might be expected, it tended to be most concerned about China and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

Soviet accommodation with the United States diminished fears among Western Europeans that the Soviet Union posed a serious threat. Thus reciprocation could help to lessen NATO's cohesion, while non-reciprocation might strengthen the bond. Soviet reciprocation was favored in the successful LTB case because it reassured NATO's European members with the exception of France.³³ Likewise, because Soviet TU-16s threatened European countries, destroying bombers would have improved Soviet-European relations. But reciprocating

28. George W. Breslauer, "Why Detente Failed: An Interpretation," in *Managing the United States-Soviet Rivalry*, ed. Alexander L. George (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1983), 331.

29. See Christer Jonsson, *The Soviet Union and the Test Ban: A Study in Soviet Negotiating Behavior* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1975), 121.

30. US ACDA, *Documents on Disarmament, 1963*, 286.

31. US ACDA, *Documents on Disarmament, 1964*, 138-139.

32. International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), *The Military Balance, 1965-66* (London: IISS, 1965), 3; and David Holloway, *The Soviet Union and the Arms Race*, 2d ed. (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1978), 67.

33. US ACDA, *Documents on Disarmament, 1963*, 267-268.

the US bomber initiative posed so many other disadvantages to the Soviet Union, the political advantage was outweighed.

In the early 1960s, political considerations of China kept the Soviets from accommodating the United States.³⁴ China's militancy toward the West and a Soviet desire to maintain an appearance of Sino-Soviet unity deterred cooperation. But after the Sino-Soviet split became obvious during the October 1962 Cuban missile crisis, the Soviets no longer felt compelled to present a facade of unity. Cooperation with the United States then helped isolate China. This political situation favored success shown by the 1963 Soviet reciprocation of the LTB and outer space initiatives. It also favored success when several of the remaining initiatives failed, indicating that other factors may overrule this one.

6. Reciprocation should not force a state to increase military expenditures in order to remain secure, and hopefully it would reduce some military burdens on the economy.

Although achieving strategic parity took precedence over restraining the military budget, the Soviets preferred using cost-effective means. In the unsuccessful CTB case, had the Soviets met US demands they would have been forced to increase defense spending in order to reach strategic parity. Because a CTB would have curtailed their ability to make qualitative military improvements, the Soviets would have had to rely on more expensive quantitative increases to improve their nuclear posture. Similarly, reciprocation of the US bomber initiative would have reduced Soviet military capabilities in Europe, since no follow-on plane was ready to replace the medium-range TU-16. To accomplish their mission, the Soviets would have had to procure more costly and less reliable long-range aircraft.³⁵

Once the Soviets achieved strategic parity in the late-1960s, potential advantages of saving money were more attractive, particularly when economic growth rates declined. Consequently, beginning in 1976, the rate of growth of military spending declined.³⁶ By the time Gorbachev came to power in 1985, the economy was widely acknowledged to be in terrible shape and trimming the defense budget became an imperative.

7. When possible, reciprocation should not threaten the budgets and traditional missions of a country's principal military services.

This condition acknowledges the significance of bureaucratic politics in formulating a country's foreign policy. The proviso is relevant when bureaucratic politics dominate. This occurs when a proposal is controversial within the leadership or when a state's chief executive is uninterested, distracted, seriously ill or tries to consolidate his or her authority by appealing to political actors or popular values that favor military strength and growth. Domestic politics also play a part when the military is able to argue effectively that high military

34. Adam Ulam, *Expansion and Coexistence: The History of Soviet Foreign Policy 1917-1967* (New York: Praeger, 1968), 613-690.

35. Wolfe, 180.

36. Shevchenko, 47.

spending is feasible or is made necessary by hostile foreign actions.

During the Khrushchev and Brezhnev years, the military had a greater impact on Soviet defense and arms control policy than it has under Gorbachev. When the military's organizational interests were threatened, it seemed to get its way in all instances but one. Thus the military successfully opposed reciprocation of the CTB, B-47 and neutron bomb initiatives. These proposals threatened the services' budgets, ability to carry out their missions, or both. In the CTB case, the military showed their opposition in journals by omitting mention to a test ban or linking it to infeasible disarmament plans and stressing the danger of Western power.³⁷

Since arms competitions are both a cause and a consequence of political tensions, to some extent their intensity is proportionate to the level of international tension. During periods of low tension, we therefore expect more arms control collaboration than in periods of high tension.

The only instance in which the military seemed not to prevail was in 1968, when for security reasons the Soviet government finally indicated interest in offensive and defensive arms limitation. Nonetheless, the military continued to oppose arms limitation talks. The anti-air defense service worried it would not be able to fulfill its missions to defend against bombers and missiles, while the Strategic Rocket Forces feared constraints would inhibit the Soviets from matching or surpassing US strategic power.³⁸ Shevchenko added that Defense Minister Andrei Grechko only reluctantly accepted the delayed opening of Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT), and even then conducted a "guerilla effort" to stall negotiations.³⁹ Despite the military's objections, the leadership halted construction of the Moscow ABM site and agreed to discuss arms limitations. But from the military's perspective Soviet reciprocation was not complete since the government had not committed itself formally to signing a treaty or to continuing the construction moratorium.

Associated with the military's not completely prevailing in the ABM case was Brezhnev's recent ascendancy over chief rival Aleksey Kosygin. Before that the Soviets did not meet US demands even partially. During the Khrushchev and Brezhnev era, in controversial situations a general-secretary who had not consolidated power bolstered his authority by appealing to the traditional interests of the military, heavy industry and the party bureaucracy—none of which are

37. Jonsson, 146, 196-197; and Shevchenko, 92, 112.

38. Newhouse, 92; and Wolfe, 270-274.

39. Shevchenko, 202.

disposed toward arms control. After gaining command, which took Khrushchev and Brezhnev several years, the general-secretary was less constrained by vested interests and more cooperative on arms control.⁴⁰

In mid-1968 military leaders continued to oppose cooperation with the United States (although perhaps less fervently than in 1967, when they had more faith in their ABM). At the same time, however, two factors supported collaboration: revised security calculations that showed the net costs of an unrestricted arms race, and a general-secretary with more authority to act in the national interest. Because of the coincidence of a new security environment and a newly ascendant general-secretary, we cannot know if or when security calculations would have dominated had Brezhnev not consolidated authority. I suspect that security concerns would have tipped the scales against non-security factors such as domestic politics which would have influenced the timing or other details.

8. The country implementing an initiative should avoid increasing international tensions unnecessarily, and it should act in ways to dispose the other state to perceive a low level of tension.

High tensions between countries are associated with very poor political relations, high and perhaps exaggerated levels of suspicion and mistrust, and enhanced prospects of war. Since arms competitions are both a cause and a consequence of political tensions, to some extent their intensity is proportionate to the level of international tension. During periods of low tension, we therefore expect more arms control collaboration than in periods of high tension. When a country's leaders perceive low tensions, they are more likely to acknowledge a unilateral initiative, to interpret its intentions as benign and to reciprocate. High tensions would not favor successful initiatives, while a moderate level of tension would have ambiguous or no effect.⁴¹

When the Soviets failed to announce reciprocation of the outer space initiative in September 1962, they probably perceived high tensions. Not until after the Cuban missile crisis of October 1962 did they likely discern tensions at a moderate level. With President Kennedy's conciliatory speech at American University in June 1963, tensions likely seemed low. Soviet reciprocation of the LTB and outer space initiatives occurred during this period of low tensions, when the Soviets also wanted to improve relations.

Low tensions favored a successful outer space initiative starting June 1963, but the Soviets waited until September to announce reciprocation. Recall that until September 1963 the Soviets thought that the United States intended to ban ballistic missiles along with orbiting nuclear weapons, making the entire pack-

40. George W. Breslauer, "Political Succession and the Soviet Policy Agenda," *Problems of Communism* Vol. 29 (1980).

41. A quantitative, events data research method can lead to a rigorous description of a country's perceptions of the level of tension. See Goldstein and Freeman, Chapter 2. Also useful is the combination of inductive and deductive methods used in Rose, 39-41. When applied to understanding Soviet perceptions, the two approaches gave compatible answers.

age seem disadvantageous to the Soviets. The time-lag between June 1963 until the Soviets announced reciprocation in September suggests that proposals that do not appear balanced militarily are unlikely to succeed even when tensions are low.

When to Use Unilateral Initiatives

The six case studies offer policy-relevant lessons about how and when to use single-shot, conditional unilateral arms control initiatives. This knowledge is crucial; otherwise a unique opportunity to control a dangerous arms race might be missed. At the other extreme, using an initiative at the wrong time or for a lost cause might leave a country with an undesirable weapon if reciprocation does not occur.

Sometimes initiatives are the best or only means to control a dangerous or unnecessarily expensive weapon. The research suggests that an initiative may be essential when domestic political actors could prevent ratification of a treaty but not a tacit agreement. The outer space case illustrates this circumstance. When the Soviets reciprocated Kennedy's initiative on September 19, 1963, they said they were willing to formalize the agreement in a treaty. Only a week before the Senate ratified the LTB Treaty after a heated debate and Kennedy wanted to avoid another ratification battle.⁴² The parties later reached a formal agreement with the 1967 Outer Space Treaty.

Since arms competitions are both a cause and a consequence of political tensions, to some extent their intensity is proportionate to the level of international tension.

Despite their advantages, unilateral initiatives cannot necessarily replace all formal negotiations. Although Kennedy implemented his LTB initiative in June 1963, he did it to facilitate formal negotiations for the LTB Treaty.⁴³ He was unwilling to settle for an informal test ban moratorium, as the United States had done in 1958. This earlier moratorium was a tacit, uninspected agreement. To the American's surprise and anger, the Soviets resumed testing in September 1961. Thus Kennedy wanted no more uninspected agreements, preferring a formal treaty which puts more constraints on abrogation than informal arrangements.⁴⁴

42. Garthoff, 25, 34-37; and Steinberg, 86, 132.

43. US ACDA, *Documents on Disarmament*, 1963, 16, 220-221.

44. We can imagine that formal negotiations may also be required when the issues are very complex and involve, for example, behaviors that necessitate asymmetrical restraints; packages of agreements with appropriate trade-offs may need to be negotiated. Furthermore, complicated

Unilateral initiatives also should be used only when they are prone to work, or when failure is unlikely to present high risks. Since initiatives sometimes fail, they obviously are no panacea. Occasionally, they work against prudent defense management. In the B-47 case, the United States responded to Soviet disinterest in its "bomber burning" proposal by storing some of the B-47s taken out of service instead of destroying them.⁴⁵ This cost money, although not much, and it brought the Soviets no closer to reciprocation. Since the US proposal was so one-sided, it also may have increased unnecessarily Soviet suspicions of US intentions and harmed the initiatives' reputation. By determining the likelihood of success, states could avoid this risk.⁴⁶

In conclusion, the research can be applied to a variety of contemporary and future arms races. Further studies may provide additions to or modifications of the conditions presented. In some instances, other types of unilateral initiatives, such as packages and sequences of initiatives, may be more productive than the single-shot variety. This article's purpose was not to provide a definitive recipe on using initiatives but rather to contribute to a growing body of knowledge.

verification mechanisms might require specification in a treaty. And when a complex arrangement is subject to uncertainty, institutional mechanisms may be essential to deal with conflicts arising over interpretation.

45. US ACDA, *Documents on Disarmament, 1966*, 144.

46. To predict a plan's viability, compare conditions favoring success with those likely to prevail when the initiative is implemented and conduct a net assessment of factors favoring and opposing reciprocation. If the probable outcome is unclear or points to failure or significant risk, then the initiative should be avoided. For a related discussion, see Rose, 143-151.



