

Washington, D.C. 20520

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MEMORANDUM

TO: ARA - Michael G. Kozak, Acting

FROM: PM - H. Allen Holmes

SUBJECT: Approaching the Argentines about Condor II

Drawn up at his request, following are arguments regarding the Condor II project which Ambassador Todman can draw upon for use with the Argentines when an appropriate occasion arises.

-- When we have raised the matter of the Condor II project with the Government of Argentina in the past, your officials have stated that it is solely a peaceful space launch vehicle program and not intended for military use. That is not the view of my government.

-- On several occasions, the President has made clear his concern about the proliferation of ballistic missiles. Administration policy in this area is firmly grounded.

-- The Condor II is capable of carrying a warhead of 500 kg (or greater) -- including a nuclear warhead -- a distance of 300 km (or more) and, therefore, qualifies as a system of missile proliferation concern. Moreover, Argentina has unsafeguarded nuclear facilities.

-- As well, Argentina does not have space research or satellite programs designed to be launched by an indigenously-produced space launch vehicle. There has been substantial U.S.-Argentine space cooperation, including discussion of a U.S. supplied launch for an Argentine satellite; this cooperation can continue in spite of our missile non-proliferation policy.

-- Furthermore, there are ramifications of the Condor II project which are of concern to the US and the other six MTCR partners.

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-- I can point to our great displeasure over the press reports of Egyptian and Iraqi support for the Condor II and the reported use of European front companies to obtain technology and equipment embargoed by the MTCR.

-- Exports of the Condor II to the Middle East would be highly destabilizing and would damage the security balance of a traditionally tense region of the world by stimulating an arms race in ballistic missiles.

-- The US and the USSR recently signed the INF Treaty which eliminates an entire class of missiles; I think you would agree that it is in no one's security interests to see this same class of missiles emerge in other parts of the world.

-- We see no justification for your Government to continue developing the Condor II and do not believe that it is in your interests to do so.

Drafter: PM/STA:J Zimmerman *CS*
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Clearances: PM:VDeCair
PM:VLehovich *Yes*
S/KP:SThompson

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