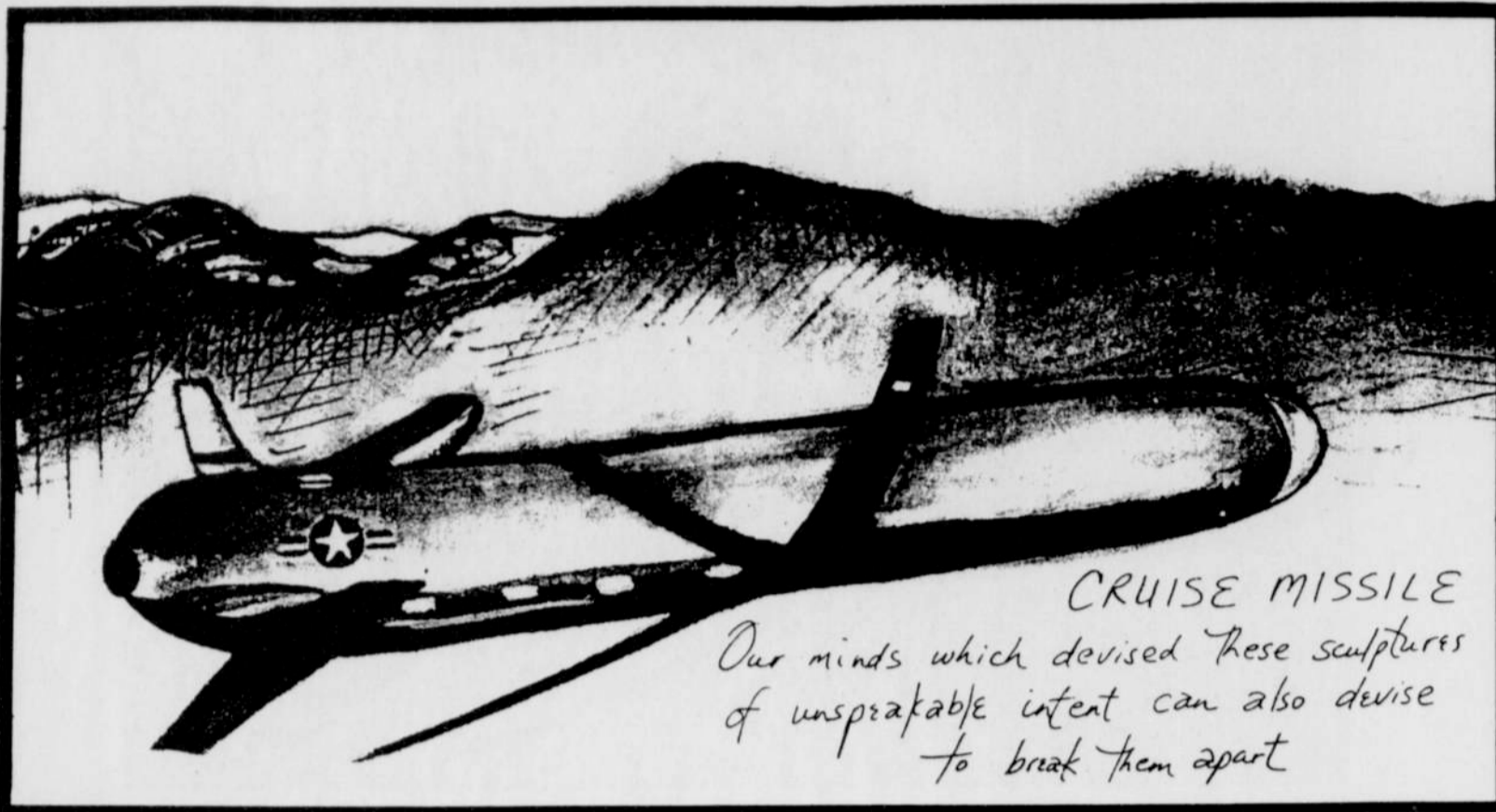


# SALT'S SAVOR LOST



DRAWINGS &amp; THOUGHTS BY HELEN HILL

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The qualitative limits of SALT 2:

The number of ICBM warheads was frozen at 1979 levels, which meant the maximum number tested.

SLBMs were limited to no more than 14 warheads, the maximum number that had been tested by either side up to 1979.

The throw-weight and total-missile weight of light ICBMs, SLBMs and ASBMs could not exceed that of the Soviet SS-19. Similar limits applied to the throw-weight and launch-weight of heavy ICBMs beyond those of the SS-18.

Each superpower was permitted to test and deploy only one new type of ICBM for the duration of the treaty. This exception gave the United States the right to proceed with its MX missile but inhibited the Soviets from their past practice of deploying three or four new types simultaneously. The new type of ICBM could not exceed the throw-weight of the SS-19 and was not to have more than 10 warheads. The Soviet Union was allowed to deploy a single warhead missile or a new MIRVed missile to replace its SS-17 and SS-19.

No more than 28 long-range cruise missiles capable of ranges of 600 kilometers could be deployed aboard either superpower's airplanes. Any aircraft equipped with long-range cruise missiles was counted as an air-launched cruise missile (ALCM).

The verification measures:

SALT 2 prohibited deliberate concealment of weapons systems. Any telemetry encryption (the encoding of missile and aircraft data) that impeded verification was banned. Any interference by one superpower with the operation of the intelligence collection systems (referred to as "national technical means") which the other superpower used to verify compliance was also prohibited.

As it was difficult to distinguish between MIRVed and non-MIRVed types of missiles once they were deployed a set of rules provided that all missiles of a type tested with MIRVs were counted even if deployed with single reentry vehicles, and all launchers of a type that contained or launched MIRVed missiles were counted, even if they contained non-MIRVed missiles.

Because the Soviet SS-16 ICBM shared certain similarities with the mobile SS-20 intermediate range ballistic missile (IRBM), including a potential capability of launch by the mobile SS-20 launcher, the Soviets agreed to scrap the SS-16.

Both superpowers were required to notify each other in advance of certain ICBM test launches.

Both superpowers were to provide figures on their own strategic offensive forces as part of an agreed upon data base.

The U.S./Soviet Standing Consultative Commission, which SALT 1 empowered for SALT 2, was to oversee the verification measures of the treaty. It was explicit that verification was to be by means belonging to each government. These included photo-reconnaissance satellites, ground based systems such as radars that observed missile tests and antennas that collected telemetry, and aircraft-based systems that included optical and other sensors.

Temporary limits were placed on certain systems that caused too much disagreement for long range resolutions to be reached. Those limits were:

The deployment of mobile ICBM launchers and the flight testing of ICBMs from such launchers were banned. Yet the development and testing of the launchers themselves was not restricted.

The flight testing and deployment of air-to-surface ballistic missiles with ranges greater than 600 kilometers were banned.

The deployment of ground-launched and sea-launched cruise missiles was limited to those incapable of ranges in excess of 600 kilometers.

There were no other restrictions on the development or flight testing of ground- and sea-launched cruise missiles, and the 600 kilometer deployment limitations were to have expired before the United States was ready to deploy them. There were no limits on the range, development, flight testing or deployment of air-launched cruise missiles.

The Soviet Backfire bomber, which had caused controversy as to classification, was given a separate category. The Soviet Union agreed to not increase its annual production of 30 of the bombers, a commitment that was to have the same legal force as the rest of the treaty.

The SALT 2 treaty was signed in Vienna, Austria on June 18, 1979 by President James Earl Carter and Premier Leonid Brezhnev. Each superpower signed a statement certifying

ing the strategic nuclear offensive weapons they possessed as of that date.

The United States: 1,054 ICBM missiles and fixed launchers; 550 ICBM launchers equipped with MIRVs; 656 submarine-launched ballistic missiles; 496 SLBM launchers equipped with MIRVs; 573 heavy bombers, three of which were equipped for cruise missiles capable of a range in excess of 600 kilometers.

The Soviet Union: 1,398 fixed ICBM launchers, of which 600 were equipped with MIRVs; 950 SLBM launchers, of which 144 were equipped with MIRVs, and 156 heavy bombers, none equipped with cruise missiles.

Neither superpower claimed to possess air-to-surface ballistic missiles.

The United States Congress refused to ratify SALT 2 as a result of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan that year. Any support of SALT was a death kiss to campaigners for public office in the U.S. during the 1980 Presidential election. Carter, who sought a second term as President, shelved the treaty.

SALT 2 was sharply criticized throughout its negotiations and ratification by Congress was always in doubt. Afghanistan was simply a convenient pretext to avoid the intense debate that would have developed during an election year; perhaps the treaty's worst feature was its bad timing. The triumph of the political right sent it to the junkyard.

Criticism tended to fall into two broad categories: that from hawks who felt that U.S. security would be endangered because SALT "gave too much to the Russians"; and by doves who felt SALT accomplished too little arms control at too large a political and financial cost. Some of their objections were:

~SALT was a charade: it served the political needs of politicians, not the security needs of the human race.

~SALT only intensified the immense power the U.S. and USSR held over the rest of the world.

~SALT would not have prevented a single qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons. Instead it allowed both superpowers to make them faster, more accurate, more deadly and more difficult to detect or defend against.

~SALT would not have reduced the nuclear arsenals of either side. Instead it allowed them to increase, which might explain why it enjoyed support from the military.

George Kennon, architect of cold war containment of the USSR, opposed the SALT pattern, which he said were "negotiations...in which each side is obsessed with the chimera of relative advantage and strives only to retain a maximum weaponry for itself while putting its opponents to the maximum disadvantage. Such negotiations...are not a way of escape from the weapons race, they are an integral part of it." Kennon proposed both superpowers cut their nuclear arsenals in half, then cut them in half again. He believed the Soviet Union's foreign policy was based on encirclement (which containment underscored) and not conquest, and that nuclear weapons were a greater danger to their possessors than to their enemies. He wrote in the *New Yorker* in 1981: "I believe that until we consent to recognize that the nuclear weapons we hold in our own hands are as much a danger to us as to those that repose in the hands of our supposed adversaries there will be no escape from the confusions and dilemmas to which such weapons have now brought us, and must bring us increasingly as time goes on."

Yet the SALT process was its most important attribute to those who supported it. W.K.H. Panofsky wrote that although SALT on technical grounds alone "has done relatively little to reduce the risks this nation or the Soviet Union might face from possible nuclear war...the SALT debate encompasses the prospect for improvements or degeneration of U.S. and Soviet relations and most phases of past and future military decisions and policies of the United States. Clearly we have here...an example of where the political impact of a military issue, in this case a specific step in arms control, has outrun the technical realities...In short, we have again created a situation where the political perception of an arms control process is affected by arguments that are irrelevant on strictly technical grounds, but where these political perceptions will ultimately affect the achievements of that agreement."

## RADIOACTIVE MURDER

The currently maligned Clinton administration made a useful and worthy fetish of releasing documents that confirmed longheld suspicions of deliberate radiation exposure of American citizens by their government over the past half century.

The purpose of these dangerous experiments was to research on live persons the effects of radiation on the human body and metabolism which would help scientists and military planners formulate possible scenarios for nuclear warfare and defense as well as design progressively lethal nuclear weapons.

The most frequent exposures were during the early years of the Cold War and the most numerous affected were several hundred thousand soldiers deployed near the ground zeros of nuclear bomb tests to determine combat capacities in nuclear war. But the most despicable and sinister research was upon private citizens who submitted to medical tests with little or no knowledge of the risks involved.

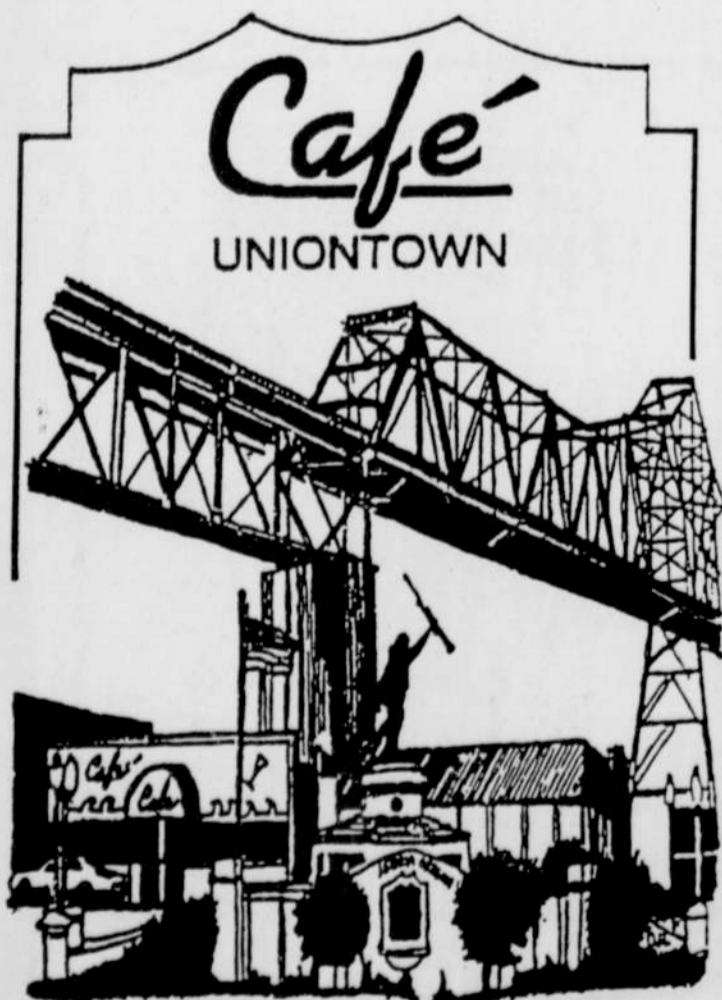
The newly formed Atomic Energy Commission (now the Energy Department) licensed the use of radioactive isotopes in human research in the 1940s, with no oversight of medical personnel, and authorized the deliberate release of radioactive elements into the environment. (Some experiments were conducted at the Hanford nuclear reservation in Washington State, as well as radioactive material released into the atmosphere.) Workers at nuclear plants and medical subjects at hospitals and universities were among those tested. They numbered at least 9,000 (with the number expected to go higher as more documents were released) and included children, newborn infants and foreigners.

A 1948 document said the radiation tests were "an opportunity to secure the type of medical information required...to interpret, in terms of human experience, the toxicological findings of small animal research."

"We are proud of shining a light on this previously untold part of the atomic age," said an official of the Clinton Energy Department.


The ultra-secretive and proudly deceptive Bush administration has abolished the document release policy.

~MICHAEL McCUSKER



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