Time running out for CED arms control?

Mar 21 1982

Dear Jerry,

I fully understand the tactical elements of your letter to the N.Y. Times.

Unfortunately, verification is in my view a more serious obstacle. Verification by invitations—which is about all they who in the BMD treaty—has just about broken down in the face of Soviet inscrutability about Sverdlovsk. They plainly don't quit a root what we think! And the end of the "UN investigation" on the Thai border gives little hope for confidence in that sphere (as an investigator).

Without some better demonstration from the USSR that they have some interest in a summit, our anxiety is that there is any possibility of a CED treaty, and I am reluctantly concluding that we had better look after the long lead time elements of repairs of a nearly unusable BMD system for retaliatory defense.

Isn't it true that we could afford some positive step on the SALT side?

Have you any idea what we could reasonably do to get this point across to them, assuming they believe an effective CED disarmament is in their interest.

I hope we can talk about this soon.

Yours,

Jim