United States Senate

MTST MIRV
(august 1, 1969)

This will acknowledge receipt of your recent communication concerning the implications of continued MIRV development and tests.

The stated purpose of the U. S. MIR is to penetrate enemy ballistic missile defenses of urban-industrial targets and to thus counteract the possible effects of the Soviet MIRV which, due to the presence of large warheads, is assumed to constitute an offensive rather than defensive weapons system. The Soviets, of course, are already well into the testing procedures for their system.

If we were to unilaterally agree to a MIRV ban there would be no reason for the Soviets to reach a meaningful conclusion in subsequent negotiations, since they already would have achieved their objective without sacrifice. Continued MIRV development is expected to put pressure on them for serious negotiations.

I appreciate having the benefit of your views on this.

Sincerely,

Everett McKinley Dirksen