MEMORANDUM FOR THE HONORABLE GEORGE P. SHULTZ
SECRETARY OF STATE

THE HONORABLE CASPAR W. WEINBERGER
SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: Risk Reduction Center Concept (U)

As you know, we have recently formulated an Administration
policy position on the risk reduction center concept as espoused by two
key Congressional supporters; Senators Nunn and Warner. In doing
so it was evident that we had a great deal of uncertainty in
just what the Senators have in mind when they refer to risk
reduction centers. Much of the ambiguity derives from the
lengthy period of time that the two of them had been promoting
crisis management concepts and the evolution of their own
thinking on the matter. After a short meeting with them earlier
this week, on the eve of their departure for Moscow, I feel that
we now have a reasonable picture of where they stand in the areas
of functions, manning, communications links and the site
location. This is not to say that they don't harbor an interest
in evolutionary change -- they probably do -- but at this point
they assert a rather modest concept of tying together a number of
ideas or arrangements which have been accepted or proposed by the
Administration in the past. Some examples:

a. The confidence building measures proposed in the
President's UNGA speech last September involved meetings and
data exchange that could be conducted in/through the
centers;

b. Regular high-level contacts between U.S./Soviet military
leaders as proposed this May in the President's speech to
European Parliaments could be conducted there; and,

c. The JMCL -- which the Senators believe was rejected by
the Soviets out of aversion to creating an autonomous link
between the militaries of each country -- could serve as the
communications link between the centers. (S)

They propose three specific functions: "clearing house" for all
required arms control/exercise notifications; meeting place for
various military-to-military exchanges, e.g., INCSEA; and,
meeting place for diplomatic exchanges and joint discussions.
There is an absence of "real-time crisis management" in their current thinking; this may reflect the realization that -- at least in the early stages -- such an adjunct might cloud, rather than clear, the decision process. (S)

On manning of the centers, they have agreed that there should be no joint manning initially. They have, however, indicated that embassy liaison personnel who could be called in on a particular issue might be a feasible approach. Communications between the centers could be essentially those envisioned under our JMCL proposal. (S)

The Senators have a definite bias against co-location of the centers in the Pentagon and to some extent within the State Department. They feel strongly that to do so unnecessarily risks rejection of the concept. Finally, there appears to be a large symbolic dimension to the Senators' concept which is difficult to capture in words. By creating an edifice devoted to the art of risk reduction they hope to nurture a dialogue which could contribute to reduced tensions in time of crisis. And, more importantly, they hope to reassure the American people that we are working to improve the relationship. In view of the critical role these two individuals play in matters of national security, I'm sure you will agree that if there is merit in their concept we should be prepared to work closely with them in developing it. (S)

As a result of the August 9, Senior Arms Control Group meeting and subsequent input from SACG principals, the attached letter was provided to the Senators as background for their upcoming trip to Moscow. (S)

Attachment:
As stated.

Copy to: Chairman Vessey (with the attachment)
Director Adelman (with the attachment)