

Prime Minister

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To note.

A.F.C.  $\frac{25}{6}$ PM/82/87THE PRIME MINISTER

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1. You will be interested to know what Professor Rostow, Director of the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, had to say when he briefed me about developments in the INF negotiations on 22 October. His message was one for you and John Nott as well as for me, but he particularly asked that what he had to say should be very closely held.
2. He said that during the second round of the negotiations, in the early summer, he had authorised the US Ambassador to the negotiations, Paul Nitze, to try an alternative solution to the zero option on his Soviet opposite number, Kvitsinsky. Rostow did not go into much detail on what these alternative proposals included, but he did say that they would have meant equal limits on US and Soviet missiles in Europe, or within range of Europe, and similar equal limits for missiles in the Far East. They would have included a compromise over the inclusion of aircraft and some provision to prevent circumvention of an INF agreement by nuclear systems of shorter range. The effect would have been very sharp reductions in the numbers of Soviet SS 20s, 4s and 5s.
3. Kvitsinsky had, on a personal basis, accepted these proposals and taken them back to Moscow during the summer recess. But on his return to Geneva in September, he had told Nitze that his authorities in Moscow had rejected the package and were insisting that the Soviet position should remain that put forward earlier in the negotiations.
4. The interpretation of these exchanges is that a debate is taking place in Moscow with at least some people (and Rostow counts Gromyko amongst them) in favour of an INF agreement, probably



as a political symbol of an improvement in East/West relations. Rostow and I agreed that while the Moscow debate continues it is all the more important that Alliance Governments should speak with one voice when talking in public about the double decision on INF. The private channel between Nitze and Kvitsinsky remains open (both Gromyko and President Reagan having agreed that it should) and Rostow would not be surprised if the Russians refer to it if and when they are ready, perhaps at some stage next year, to offer concessions. It seems unlikely that these would be made before the Federal German elections in March.

5. As I say, Rostow particularly stressed the sensitivity of what he was telling me; he has briefed Foreign Ministers (and some Defence Ministers and Heads of Government) in the INF basing countries only, and has not included any reference to this in his briefing of other NATO colleagues.

6. I am copying this minute to the Secretary of State for Defence and Sir R Armstrong.

(FRANCIS PYM)

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

25 October 1982

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