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YOUR TELEGRAM NO 875 (NOT TO ALL): US POLICIES ON ARMS CONTROL

SUMMARY

1. WITH THE WHITE HOUSE TAKING AN INCREASINGLY DIRECT INTEREST IN THE PROSPECTS FOR NUCLEAR ARMS CONTROL, THE BALANCE WITHIN THE ADMINISTRATION HAS SHIFTED IN FAVOUR OF THOSE WHO WISH SERIOUSLY TO EXPLORE WITH THE SOVIET UNION THE PROSPECTS FOR A NEW STRATEGIC ARMS AGREEMENT. THE PRESIDENT WILL REMAIN DETERMINED THAT AGREEMENTS BOTH IN START AND INF MUST BE BASED ON REDUCTIONS, GENUINE EQUALITY AND ADEQUATE VERIFICATION. THERE IS POTENTIAL FOR FURTHER MOVEMENT IN THE US POSITION, BUT THIS AND THE PROSPECTS FOR PROGRESS IN BOTH NEGOTIATIONS WILL DEPEND ON A SIGNIFICANT SOVIET RESPONSE, OF WHICH THERE HAS SO FAR BEEN LITTLE SIGN.

DETAIL

2. THE ADMINISTRATION HAS COME UNDER INCREASING POLITICAL PRESSURE TO ADOPT A MORE FORTHCOMING ATTITUDE TO ARMS CONTROL. WHILE FEW AMERICANS BELIEVE THAT ARMS CONTROL AGREEMENTS CAN MAKE MUCH REAL CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL SECURITY, THERE IS PUBLIC CONCERN AT THE BREAKDOWN OF DIALOGUE WITH THE SOVIET UNION AND THE APPARENTLY INDEFINITE ACCUMULATION OF NUCLEAR WARHEADS ON BOTH SIDES. ALL THE DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES HAVE BEEN PAYING LIP SERVICE TO THE IDEA OF A MUTUAL AND VERIFIABLE "FREEZE", WITHOUT REALLY BELIEVING IN THE CONCEPT (A "FREEZE" WOULD PROHIBIT MODERNISATION AND WOULD NOT BE FULLY VERIFIABLE OR CAPABLE OF IMPLEMENTATION FOR MORE THAN A VERY LIMITED PERIOD).

3. DESPITE THE FREEZE CAMPAIGN, THE PRESIDENT HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL BOTH IN INCREASING REAL DEFENCE SPENDING BY VERY LARGE AMOUNTS (WELL OVER FIVE PER CENT) IN SUCCESSIVE FISCAL YEARS AND IN SECURING CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL FOR THE MAJOR ELEMENTS OF HIS PLAN TO MODERNISE US STRATEGIC NUCLEAR FORCES (TRIDENT II, THE B1 BOMBER AND MX MISSILE). APPROVAL FOR CONTINUED FUNDING OF THE MX MISSILE, HOWEVER, HAS BEEN LINKED BY SEVERAL INFLUENTIAL SENATORS TO A GREATER DISPLAY OF ZEAL IN PURSUIT OF ARMS CONTROL.

4. THE US ALLERGY TO NON-VERIFIABLE AGREEMENTS HAS BEEN INCREASED BY

A) THE EVIDENCE OF THE USE OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS IN SOUTH EAST ASIA AND, POSSIBLY, AFGHANISTAN:

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B) SOVIET EXPLOITATION OF AMBIGUITIES IN THE SALT II TREATY TO TEST TWO NEW TYPES OF ICBM:

C) SUSPICIONS THAT THE SOVIET UNION MAY HAVE TESTED ABOVE THE 150 KILOTON LIMIT IN THE THRESHOLD TEST BAN TREATY (SEE PARA 10 BELOW).

INF

5. THE ADMINISTRATION IS FIRM ON THE COMPLETE EXCLUSION OF BRITISH AND FRENCH NUCLEAR SYSTEMS FROM INF AND WILL CONTINUE TO INSIST THAT AGREEMENT MUST BE BASED ON EQUAL US AND SOVIET INF WARHEADS. THE AMERICANS AT PRESENT CAN SEE NO SIGN OF FLEXIBILITY IN THE SOVIET POSITION. THE PRESIDENT BELIEVES THAT THE RUSSIANS WILL ONLY NEGOTIATE SERIOUSLY ONCE DEPLOYMENT IS UNDER WAY. GIVEN SOVIET NUMERICAL SUPERIORITY AND THE PROBABILITY OF FURTHER SOVIET DEPLOYMENTS, OTHERS ARE LESS SANGUINE THAT IT WILL BE POSSIBLE TO NEGOTIATE AN INF AGREEMENT EVEN AT THAT STAGE. THE AMERICANS EXPECT THE RUSSIANS TO DEPLOY UP TO 100 MORE SS20S IN SOVIET ASIA, AND TO INCREASE THE DEPLOYMENT OF NEW SHORTER RANGE SYSTEMS IN EASTERN EUROPE. NITZE HAS AUTHORITY TO EXPLORE THE SOVIET POSITION AND WILL DO SO SERIOUSLY. THE ADMINISTRATION IS LOOKING AT WAYS OF FLESHING OUT THE PROPOSAL FOR RECIPROCAL RESTRAINTS ON SHORTER RANGE SYSTEMS. BECAUSE OF THE MOBILITY OF THE SS20S, AND THE IMPLICATIONS VIS A VIS THE JAPANESE AND CHINESE, THE AMERICANS WILL RESIST ANY FORMAL DEPARTURE FROM THE CONCEPT OF GLOBAL CEILINGS, THOUGH PRIVATELY THEY DO NOT EXCLUDE COMPLETELY SOME LIMITED ALLOWANCE FOR MISSILES IN SOVIET ASIA IF ALL OTHER ISSUES COULD BE SATISFACTORILY RESOLVED. THEY ARE CONTEMPLATING PROPOSING EQUAL LIMITS ON CERTAIN CATEGORIES OF INTERMEDIATE RANGE AIRCRAFT.

START

6. THE PRESIDENT'S CRITICISM OF THE SALT AGREEMENTS WAS BASED IN PART ON THE FACT THAT BOTH SALT I AND SALT II PERMITTED FURTHER MASSIVE INCREASES IN WARHEAD NUMBERS. IN THE RECENT REVIEW OF THE US POSITION THE ADMINISTRATION HAS RETAINED THE CENTRAL FEATURE OF THE START PROPOSAL, WHICH IS THAT BOTH SIDES SHOULD REDUCE TO 5,000 WARHEADS ON INTERCONTINENTAL BALLISTIC MISSILES (FROM CURRENT LEVELS OF 7,200 FOR THE UNITED STATES AND 7,900 FOR THE SOVIET UNION). THE CONCENTRATION ON BALLISTIC MISSILES, RATHER THAN AIRCRAFT AND CRUISE MISSILES, IS JUSTIFIED BY THE FACT THAT ICBMS ARE THE MOST THREATENING, FAST-MOVING SYSTEMS, USEABLE IN A PREEMPTIVE STRIKE. THE US OBJECTIVE IS ALSO TO REDUCE THE FIVE TO TWO SOVIET ADVANTAGE IN THROW-WEIGHT.

7. THE US HAS PROPOSED EQUAL BOMBER LIMITS, INCLUDING BACKFIRE: AND LIMITS ON AIR-LAUNCHED CRUISE MISSILES. SEA-LAUNCHED CRUISE MISSILES (SLCMS) ARE NOT YET COVERED IN THE US PROPOSAL, IT BEING ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN NUCLEAR AND CONVENTIONALLY ARMED SLCMS, OR TO VERIFY THEIR RANGE. THE PRESIDENT HAS NOW SAID THAT THE US IS PREPARED TO RAISE THE LIMIT ON THE NUMBER OF DEPLOYED BALLISTIC MISSILES. THE RUSSIANS HAVE PROPOSED REDUCTIONS TO 1800 LAUNCHERS ON EACH SIDE, BUT SO FAR HAVE REFUSED TO INDICATE WHAT THIS WOULD MEAN IN TERMS OF WARHEADS.

THE GAP BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES IS WIDE. THE PRESIDENT HAS NOT CHANGED THE PROPOSED SUB-LIMITS WHICH WOULD REQUIRE THE RUSSIANS TO DISMANTLE A HIGH PROPORTION OF THEIR HEAVY AND MEDIUM LAND-BASED MISSILES. WHILE STILL DETERMINED TO REDUCE THE SOVIET ADVANTAGE IN THROW-WEIGHT, THE AMERICANS WOULD BE PREPARED TO MODIFY THIS ASPECT OF THEIR PROPOSALS IF THERE WERE CORRESPONDING SIGNS OF FLEXIBILITY ON THE SOVIET SIDE. IF PRESIDENT REAGAN DECIDES TO RUN FOR RE-ELECTION, THERE COULD BE OBVIOUS POLITICAL ADVANTAGES IN SEEKING TO ACHIEVE A NEW VLADIVOSTOK TYPE FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT IN START. IF SUCH AN AGREEMENT WERE ACHIEVABLE, IT COULD BE ENDORSED AT A SUMMIT EARLY NEXT YEAR. THE PRESIDENT IS NOT THE MAN, HOWEVER, TO MAKE MAJOR CONCESSIONS AGAINST HIS JUDGEMENT OR THE ADVICE OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF TO ACHIEVE THIS: AND ANDROPOV IS UNLIKELY TO DO HIM ANY FAVOURS TO HELP SECURE HIS RE-ELECTION.

MBFR

8. SHULTZ HAS TAKEN A PERSONAL INTEREST IN TRYING TO GIVE SOME NEW IMPETUS TO MBFR. THE AMERICANS WILL SOUND OUT THE RUSSIANS BILATERALLY ON THEIR WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT THE WESTERN PACKAGE ON VERIFICATION MEASURES IN EXCHANGE FOR REDUCED EMPHASIS ON PRIOR AGREEMENT ON DATA. THESE IDEAS ARE NOT FULLY WORKED OUT AND THE AMERICANS ACCEPT THAT THE DATA ISSUE COULD NOT BE SET ASIDE FOR ANYTHING OTHER THAN A PRELIMINARY PHASE. WHETHER THESE MOVES LEAD ANYWHERE WILL DEPEND ON THE SOVIET RESPONSE ON VERIFICATION.

CSCE/CDE

9. IN THE CSCE REVIEW CONFERENCE IN MADRID THE AMERICANS ARE INSISTING, WITH ALLIED SUPPORT, ON IMPROVEMENTS TO THE PASSAGES IN THE CONCLUDING DOCUMENT DEALING WITH HUMAN RIGHTS. THEY ALSO INSIST THAT THERE MUST BE IMPROVEMENT IN THE SOVIET PERFORMANCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS BEFORE THERE IS AGREEMENT TO MOVE ON TO A CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT IN EUROPE (CDE). THE AMERICANS HAVE ACHIEVED PROGRESS ON THE QUESTION OF THE PENTECOSTALISTS AND ARE CONTINUING THEIR EFFORTS TO SECURE THE RELEASE OF SHCHARANSKY. THE STATE DEPARTMENT SEE ATTRACTIONS IN MOVING TOWARDS A CDE NEXT YEAR, BUT WILL NEED TO ACHIEVE ENOUGH ON HUMAN RIGHTS TO SATISFY CONGRESSIONAL CRITICS HERE WHO CONTEND THAT SOVIET PERFORMANCE, INCLUDING THE DETENTION OF THE HELSINKI MONITORING GROUPS, HAS MADE NONSENSE OF THE CSCE PROCESS.

NUCLEAR TESTING

10. U.S. ESTIMATES OF SOVIET UNDERGROUND NUCLEAR TESTS HAVE LED TO THE CONCLUSION HERE THAT THERE IS A NINETY PER CENT PROBABILITY (THOUGH NO ABSOLUTE CERTAINTY) THAT THE RUSSIANS HAVE CONDUCTED SOME TESTS ABOVE THE 150 KILOTON LIMIT SPECIFIED IN THE THRESHOLD TEST BAN TREATY. THERE IS NO PROSPECT OF THE SENATE RATIFYING A TREATY THE VERIFICATION PROVISIONS OF WHICH ALLOW A 100 PER CENT MARGIN OF ERROR IN THE ESTIMATE OF TEST YIELDS. THE RUSSIANS HAVE REJECTED U.S. PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVED VERIFICATION THROUGH INSPECTION OF TESTS ABOVE 75 KILOTONS. THE U.S. IS CONSIDERING WAYS OF PURSUING A DIALOGUE ABOUT VERIFICATION. THERE WILL BE NO INTEREST IN IDEAS OF A DEGRESSIVE THRESHOLD UNTIL VERIFICATION PROBLEMS CAN BE RESOLVED.

CHEMICAL WARFARE

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11. THE PENTAGON ARE CONCERNED AT THE EXTENT TO WHICH SOVIET MILITARY EXERCISES ARE ACCOMPANIED BY TRAINING IN CHEMICAL WARFARE. THE ADMINISTRATION IS SEEKING FROM CONGRESS AUTHORITY TO MODERNISE THE U.S. CW STOCKPILE IN THE U.S. THROUGH THE PRODUCTION OF BINARY WEAPONS (SAFER TO OPERATE THAN EXISTING CHEMICAL WEAPONS) AS A DETERRENT TO SOVIET CW USE. THERE IS LITTLE PROSPECT OF CONGRESS VOTING FUNDS FOR THIS PURPOSE, THOUGH THEY WILL DO SO FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF CW DEFENSIVE EQUIPMENT. THE ADMINISTRATION IS CONTENT FOR US TO PURSUE OUR EFFORTS TOWARDS A CW AGREEMENT IN THE DISARMAMENT COMMITTEE, BUT IS EXTREMELY SCEPTICAL ABOUT SOVIET WILLINGNESS TO NEGOTIATE ANY AGREEMENT ENTAILING ADEQUATE VERIFICATION, AND GENERALLY DISTRUSTFUL OF WHAT THEY REGARD AS THE DISPOSITION OF THE CD TOWARDS PURELY DECLARATORY ARMS CONTROL MEASURES.

OUTER SPACE

12. THE PRESENT ADMINISTRATION CAN SEE NO INCENTIVE TO PURSUE ARMS CONTROL AGREEMENTS IN OUTER SPACE GIVEN, THE DIFFICULTIES OF VERIFICATION: THE INCREASING MILITARY APPLICATION OF SATELLITES: THE POTENTIAL U.S. TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANTAGE AND THE FACT THAT THE SOVIET UNION HAS ALREADY TESTED ANTI-SATELLITE WEAPONS.

COMMENT

13. WHILE ATTENTION IS BEING DEVOTED TO NEW MOVES IN MBFR AND, SUBJECT TO SOME SATISFACTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS, THE POSSIBILITY FOR PROGRESS TOWARDS A CDE, THE MAIN FOCUS OF INTEREST IS ON NUCLEAR ISSUES. THERE IS POTENTIAL FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE U.S. POSITION IN START. FOR INSTANCE, WE HAVE SUGGESTED THAT, IN THE INTEREST OF PUTTING FORWARD A COMPREHENSIVE PROPOSAL, THE U.S. SHOULD BE PREPARED TO STATE A READINESS IN PRINCIPLE TO EXAMINE WAYS TO ACHIEVE EQUAL LIMITATIONS ON SLCMS, LEAVING THE VERY COMPLEX TECHNICAL ISSUES INVOLVED TO BE THE SUBJECT OF SUBSEQUENT NEGOTIATION. THOUGHT IS BEING GIVEN TO WAYS OF INCORPORATING A QUOTE BUILD DOWN UNQUOTE INTO THE U.S. POSITION (IE THE IDEA THAT MORE THAN ONE EXISTING WARHEAD SHOULD BE RETIRED FOR EACH NEW WARHEAD DEPLOYED). THE U.S. WILL BE SEEKING TO PROBE THE SOVIET POSITION IN SHULTZ'S PRIVATE MEETINGS WITH DOBRYNIN, AS WELL AS THROUGH THE FORMAL NEGOTIATIONS IN GENEVA. IF THE PRIVATE SOVIET RESPONSE IS AS DISMISSIVE AS THE INITIAL TASS REACTION, THERE WILL BE A REDUCED DISPOSITION HERE TO CONSIDER FURTHER MOVEMENT IN THE ABSENCE OF ANY ON THE SOVIET SIDE.

F C O PASS SAVING TO ANKARA, ATHENS, BRUSSELS, COPENHAGEN, LISBON, LUXEMBOURG, OTTAWA, OSLO, ROME, REYKJAVIK, THE HAGUE.
WRIGHT [REPEATED AS REQUESTED] [THIS TELEGRAM WAS NOT ADVANCED]
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