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MY TELNO 2249: ARMS CONTROL: NITZE/KARPOV NST TALKS

SUMMARY

1. A BUSINESS-LIKE SESSION. NEW DEVELOPMENTS ON INF. *ms*

DETAIL

2. THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S MEETINGS LATER TODAY WITH WEINBERGER AND SHULTZ WILL ENABLE US TO PICK UP THE FULL FLAVOUR OF THE NITZE/KARPOV TALKS HERE ON 5/6 SEPTEMBER. THE US WILL ALSO BE BRIEFING AT NATO: ABSHIRE HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED TO GIVE A PRELIMINARY ACCOUNT IMMEDIATELY, AND THE US NST TEAM WILL STOP OFF IN BRUSSELS (16 OR 17 SEPTEMBER) FOR A FULL BRIEFING EN ROUTE BACK TO GENEVA.

3. ACCOUNTS OF THE TALKS HAVE SO FAR BEEN KEPT VERY CLOSE HERE, BECAUSE OF HIGH LEVEL CONCERN AT THE EARLIER NEW YORK TIMES LEAK. THERE HAVE AS YET BEEN NO LEAKS WHATSOEVER OF THE DISCUSSIONS WITH KARPOV. BUT OUR UNDERSTANDING IS THAT THEY WENT RATHER WELL: THAT THE ATMOSPHERE WAS BUSINESS-LIKE; AND THAT THERE WERE SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS ON INF.

4. ON START, THE US TEAM WERE, AS WE EXPECTED, NOT IN A POSITION TO PUT FORWARD THE NEW (30 PER CENT) REDUCTIONS PROPOSAL DISCUSSED IN TUR. OSD, AND WEINBERGER HIMSELF, ARE STILL DIGGING IN AGAINST DROPPING BELOW 50 PER CENT: THEIRS IS WIDELY SEEN AS A WRECKING AMENDMENT, AND LIKELY TO BE OVER-RULED IN THE END BY THE WHITE HOUSE. WEINBERGER ALSO WANTS SEPARATE TREATMENT OF MOBILE MISSILES (PERHAPS MAINTENANCE OF THE PROPOSED BAN), WHEREAS THE NEW (LEHMAN) PROPOSAL WOULD LUMP THEM TOGETHER WITH HEAVY ICBMS UNDER THE NEW 1650 SUB-LIMIT. OUR FIRST IMPRESSION IS THAT AS A RESULT THE DISCUSSION WITH KARPOV, THOUGH LENGTHY, DID NOT GET BEYOND GENERALITIES AND PRINCIPLES, AND THAT NO NEW NUMBERS WERE TABLED BY EITHER SIDE.

5. ON THE OFFENSIVE/DEFENSIVE RELATIONSHIP, THE DISCUSSION SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN VERY BRIEF, WITH THE RUSSIANS ADMITTING THAT THE BALL WAS IN THEIR COURT, WITH A SOVIET REPLY OWING TO THE 25 JULY REAGAN MESSAGE.

6. ON INF, THE RUSSIANS MADE A NEW PROPOSAL WHICH, THOUGH EXPRESSED IN TERMS OF LAUNCHERS, WOULD MEAN THAT,

(A) THERE WOULD BE 100 LRINF WARHEADS ON EACH SIDE IN EUROPE. ON THE SOVIET SIDE, THESE WOULD ALL BE SS20 WARHEADS AND ON THE US SIDE ALL GLCM WARHEADS (IE PERSHING IIS WOULD NOT BE ALLOWED):

(B) THERE WOULD BE A FREEZE ON SS20S IN SOVIET ASIA. THE US WOULD HAVE THE RIGHT TO HOLD AN EQUAL NUMBER OF LRINF WARHEADS IN THE CONTINENTAL US, BUT NOT IN ALASKA.

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7. THE US TEAM RESPONDED THAT THE SOVIET PROPOSAL FOR 100 LRINF WARHEADS ON EACH SIDE IN EUROPE WOULD PROBABLY BE ACCEPTABLE BUT ONLY IF SS20 WARHEADS IN SOVIET ASIA WERE ALSO LIMITED TO 100: THE US HAD THE RIGHT TO HOLD MATCHING US WARHEADS ALASKA AS WELL AS THE REST OF THE CONTINENTAL US: THE US WERE PERMITTED TO DEPLOY SOME PERSHING IIS AS PART OF A GLCM/PII MIX:

AND SATISFACTORY EQUAL LIMITS WERE SET ON SRINF AS PART OF ANY AGREEMENT ON THESE LINES. THE SOVIET TEAM MADE NO DEFINITIVE RESPONSE.

8. STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS ARE ENCOURAGED BY SOME ELEMENTS OF THE NEW SOVIET PROPOSALS, NOTABLY THE APPARENT ACCEPTANCE BY THE RUSSIANS OF US/SOVIET WARHEAD EQUALITY BOTH IN EUROPE AND GLOBALLY (SIGNIFICANTLY, THE RUSSIANS SAID NOTHING WHATSOEVER ABOUT COMPENSATION FOR OR A FREEZE ON UK AND FRENCH SYSTEMS ALTHOUGH GIVEN PLENTY OF OPPORTUNITY TO DO SO). THEY ARE ALSO ENCOURAGED BY THE LOW WARHEAD TOTALS PROPOSED BY THE RUSSIANS FOR EUROPE, THE ABSENCE OF ANY SOVIET DEMAND FOR US NUCLEAR REDUCTIONS IN ASIA TO MATCH THE PROPOSED FREEZE ON ASIAN SS20S, AND THE SOVIET FAILURE TO REITERATE THEIR EARLIER NO-TRANSFER DEMANDS. ON THE NEGATIVE SIDE, THE SOVIET TEAM APPARENTLY HAD NOTHING TO SAY ON VERIFICATION, ARGUED THAT THE SRINF PROBLEM SHOULD BE ADDRESSED AT A LATER STAGE (THE RUSSIANS DID, HOWEVER, APPEAR TO RECOGNISE SRINF AS AN ISSUE), AND SHOWED NO INCLINATION TO ACCEPT ANYTHING BETTER THAN A FREEZE ON ASIAN SS20S.

9. HOLMES WILL OF COURSE WISH TO DISCUSS THESE POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN DETAIL AT NEXT WEEK'S SCG MEETING. INTER-AGENCY ENDORSEMENT OF THE PROGRESS MADE IS NOT 100 PER CENT CERTAIN, FOR OSD MAY STILL PRESS FOR THE GLOBAL ZERO/ZERO SOLUTION (AGAIN NO DOUBT PARTLY AS A WRECKING AMENDMENT). AND STATE RECOGNISE THAT THEY MAY BE HEADING FOR PROBLEMS WITH THE JAPANESE.

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