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INFO ROUTINE UKDIS GENEVA, UKDEL VIENNA, UKDEL STOCKHOLM

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Not much here
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[FRAME EXTERNAL]

US/SOVIET ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS: PROSPECTS FOR GENEVA ROUND THREE

SUMMARY

1. NO SUBSTANTIVE NEW ELEMENTS IN THE US APPROACH TO THE THIRD ROUND IN GENEVA. THE BALL IS CONSIDERED TO BE IN THE SOVIET COURT AND THE ADMINISTRATION INSIST THAT ACTUAL SOVIET PROPOSALS ARE REQUIRED IN GENEVA BEFORE SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS CAN BE MADE. PRIMARY US OBJECTIVE WILL BE TO ELICIT FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT SOVIET THINKING, ESPECIALLY ON REDUCTIONS IN STRATEGIC SYSTEMS.
2. THE THIRD ROUND ENDS IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE REAGAN/GORBACHEV MEETING ON 19-20 NOVEMBER. PROSPECTS FOR ARMS CONTROL PROGRESS AT THAT MEETING ARE THOUGHT TO DEPEND VERY LARGELY ON WHETHER ANY SUCH SOVIET PROPOSALS ARE FORTHCOMING, EITHER IN GENEVA OR DURING SHEVARDNADZE'S VISIT TO THE US NEXT WEEK. MORE PESSIMISTS THAN OPTIMISTS ON PROSPECTS OVER THE NEXT TWO MONTHS, PARTICULARLY FOLLOWING THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS ON SDI ON 17 SEPTEMBER (SEE MIFT).

DETAIL

3. THE THIRD ROUND OF THE US/SOVIET ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS IN GENEVA BEGINS ON 19 SEPTEMBER AND IS DUE TO END 4 DAYS BEFORE THE REAGAN/GORBACHEV MEETING ON 19-20 NOVEMBER. OBTAINING INTER-AGENCY AGREEMENT TO THE US DELEGATION'S INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE THIRD ROUND (WHICH HAVE NOW BEEN APPROVED BY THE PRESIDENT) HAS PROVED AN UNCONTENTIOUS PROCESS: FOR THE GENERAL VIEW IS THAT NO NEW US INITIATIVES ARE REQUIRED UNTIL THERE IS REAL EVIDENCE OF SOVIET SERIOUSNESS, AND THAT THE US SHOULD THEREFORE WAIT AND SEE WHETHER SOVIET HINTS OF READINESS TO CONSIDER NEW MOVES (ESPECIALLY ON REDUCTIONS IN STRATEGIC SYSTEMS) ARE REFLECTED IN ACTUAL PROPOSALS EITHER IN GENEVA OR FROM SHEVARDNADZE DURING HIS VISIT TO THE US NEXT WEEK. DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE TRADE-OFFS BETWEEN REDUCTIONS IN OFFENSIVE SYSTEMS AND CONSTRAINTS ON SDI APPEARS TO TAKE PLACE ON AN INFORMAL AND UNSTRUCTURED BASIS ONLY, AND ONLY AT A RELATIVELY LOW LEVEL.

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STRATEGIC SYSTEMS

4. TOWER HAS NO NEW INSTRUCTIONS. THE ADMINISTRATION CONSIDER THAT HE HAS ALL ALONG HAD CONSIDERABLE FLEXIBILITY. IN PARTICULAR, HE IS FREE TO MAKE CLEAR TO THE RUSSIANS THAT THE ADMINISTRATION CAN ACCEPT TRADE-OFFS BETWEEN THE US ADVANTAGE IN BOMBERS AND THE SOVIET ADVANTAGE IN BALLISTIC MISSILES AND COULD ENVISAGE VARIOUS WAYS OF ACHIEVING THIS.

5. THE MAIN US OBJECTIVE IN THE STRATEGIC SYSTEMS NEGOTIATING GROUP WILL BE TO DRAW OUT THE RUSSIANS ON THE PRECISE CONTENT OF IDEAS THEY INTRODUCED, MAINLY INFORMALLY, DURING ROUND TWO AND TO SEEK TO CLARIFY WHAT MAY LIE BEHIND REMARKS (EG BY GORBACHEV TO TIME MAGAZINE) ABOUT CONDITIONAL SOVIET WILLINGNESS TO ENVISAGE RADICAL REDUCTIONS IN NUCLEAR SYSTEMS. THE US DELEGATION IS THEREFORE INSTRUCTED TO EXPLORE SOVIET HINTS OF READINESS TO MAKE EQUAL PERCENTAGE REDUCTIONS IN SNDVS AND COMPARABLE REDUCTIONS IN WARHEADS/WEAPONS (THE RUSSIANS HAVE NOT SPECIFIED WHICH), AND PLACE A PERCENTAGE LIMIT ON THE NUMBER OF WARHEADS/WEAPONS CARRIED BY ANY ONE TYPE OF SNDV. AMONG THE KEY QUESTIONS TO WHICH THE US DELEGATION WILL BE SEEKING ANSWERS ARE:

- (A) FROM WHAT CEILINGS ANY PERCENTAGE REDUCTIONS ON THESE LINES WOULD BE TAKEN,
- (B) HOW LARGE ANY SUCH REDUCTIONS WOULD BE,
- (C) HOW LARGE THE PERCENTAGE OF WARHEADS PERMITTED ON ANY SINGLE TYPE OF SNDV WOULD BE,
- (D) HOW BOMBER WEAPONS WOULD BE COUNTED,
- (E) WHETHER THERE IS ANY SOVIET WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT LIMITS ON THROWWEIGHT.

INF

5. GLITMAN HAS NOT ASKED FOR NEW INSTRUCTIONS AND HAS RECEIVED NONE. HE ALREADY HAS FLEXIBILITY (A) TO GIVE THE RUSSIANS MORE INFORMATION ABOUT TYPES OF AIRCRAFT THE ADMINISTRATION MIGHT BE PREPARED TO SEE CONSTRAINED IN AN INF AGREEMENT, AND (B) TO TELL THE RUSSIANS THAT THE US WOULD BE WILLING TO QUOTE SATISFY UNQUOTE THE RUSSIANS ON US INF DEPLOYMENTS OUTSIDE EUROPE IF A SATISFACTORY OVERALL INF AGREEMENT COULD BE REACHED. THIS IS BELIEVED TO BE AS MUCH FLEXIBILITY AS HE NEEDS, IN THE ABSENCE OF MOVES BY THE SOVIET SIDE.

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DEFENCE/SPACE

6. AGAIN, THE US NEGOTIATORS HAVE NO SUBSTANTIVELY NEW INSTRUCTIONS. THEIR PRIMARY OBJECTIVE WILL BE TO TRY TO ENGAGE THE SOVIET DELEGATION IN FURTHER DISCUSSION OF ARM TREATY DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS, AND ALSO OF POSSIBLE SCENARIOS FOR THE TRANSITION FROM AN OFFENCE-DOMINATED STRATEGIC POSTURE TO A DEFENCE-DOMINATED ONE. THE DELEGATION IS EQUIPPED TO OFFER FURTHER EXPLANATIONS OF THE US APPROACH ON BOTH QUESTIONS. US ATTEMPTS IN ROUNDS ONE AND TWO TO DRAW THE RUSSIANS INTO A DIALOGUE IN THESE TWO AREAS HAVE MET WITH ONLY LIMITED SUCCESS. BUT THE SOVIET REACTION HAS NOT BEEN ENTIRELY NEGATIVE AND THE AMERICANS HOPE THAT, FOLLOWING THE TIME INTERVIEW AND GORBACHEV'S MEETING WITH US SENATORS IN MOSCOW, THE RUSSIANS MAY HAVE SOMETHING NEW TO SAY ON THE SOVIET APPROACH TO PERMITTED RESEARCH UNDER THE ARM TREATY.

7. IN SHORT THE BALL IS THOUGHT TO BE SQUARELY IN THE SOVIET COURT AND HOW THE RUSSIANS PLAY THEIR HAND DURING THE NEXT TWO WEEKS OR SO IN GENEVA AND DURING SHEVARDNADZE'S VISIT HERE NEXT WEEK IS CONSIDERED THE CRUCIAL DETERMINANT OF THE ARMS CONTROL PROSPECTS FOR THE REAGAN/GORBACHEV MEETING IN NOVEMBER. OFFICIALS AND OBSERVERS PREPARED TO FORECAST THESE PROSPECTS RANGE FROM THE CAUTIOUSLY OPTIMISTIC TO THE DEEPLY PESSIMISTIC. BUT THE PESSIMISTS ARE IN THE MAJORITY AND THE OPTIMISTS TEND TO BE OPTIMISTIC BECAUSE THEY PRIVATELY ASSUME THAT, IF THE RUSSIANS SHOW THEMSELVES SERIOUS ABOUT OFFENSIVE REDUCTIONS, THE PRESIDENT WILL BE PREPARED TO RESPOND BY OFFERING SIGNIFICANT CONSTRAINTS ON THE SDI. AND ANY SUCH ASSUMPTION, AT LEAST AS FAR AS THE NEAR FUTURE IS CONCERNED, LOOKS EVEN SHAKIER TODAY THAN IT DID YESTERDAY (SEE MIFT).

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