

Confidential

CONFIDENTIAL

UK COMMS ONLY

FM MOSCOW

TO PRIORITY FCO

TELNO 137

OF 031130Z FEBRUARY 87

INFO PRIORITY WASHINGTON, BONN, PARIS, UKDEL NATO, UKDIS GENEVA

INFO PRIORITY MODUK (DACU)

SIC EMA/EMC/EME *ms***US/SOVIET TALKS IN GENEVA**

1. THE US EMBASSY IN MOSCOW HAS GIVEN AN UPBEAT BRIEFING ON THE CURRENT STATE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS IN GENEVA SINCE FIRST DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER VORONTSOV TOOK OVER. ACCORDING TO THE AMERICAN MINISTER COMBS, VORONTSOV WAS SHOWING GREAT FLEXIBILITY. HE HAD AGREED TO PUT AN END TO THE FORMAL PLENARY SESSIONS. THERE WAS A LOT MORE INFORMAL DISCUSSION AND GIVE AND TAKE. HE SUMMED IT UP BY SAYING THAT THE MEETING HAD GONE FROM EXPOSITION TO EXPLANATION.
2. VORONTSOV HAD ALSO AGREED TO A PROPOSAL WHICH SHULTZ HAD ORIGINALLY PUT TO SHEVARDNADZE IN VIENNA THAT THE TWO SIDES SHOULD SET DOWN IN A JOINT DOCUMENT WHAT THEIR POST REYKJAVIK POSITIONS WERE IN ALL THREE AREAS. THIS WAS NOT INTENDED IN ITSELF AS A GAP-NORROWING EXERCISE ON SUBSTANCE APART FROM THE REMOVAL OF POST-REYKJAVIK RHETORIC. THIS EXERCISE WAS NOW (NOW) GOING WELL. ALTHOUGH VORONTSOV HAD NOT SAID SO IN TERMS, THE AMERICANS HAD THE CLEAR FEELING THAT HIS AIM WAS TO PRESENT THESE JOINT DOCUMENTS TO SHULTZ AND SHEVARDNADZE WHO WOULD THEN MEET PROBABLY IN MOSCOW TO SEE IF THE GAP COULD BE NARROWED ENOUGH TO MERIT REOPENING THE QUESTION OF A SUMMIT.
3. ONE SMALL REFLECTION THAT THE GENEVA TALKS HAVE NOT FOLLOWED THE USUAL RUT, HAS BEEN A CHANGE IN THE WORDING OF THE REGULAR BRIEF TASS COMMUNIQUES FROM GENEVA THAT APPEAR IN THE SOVIET PRESS. SINCE THE TALKS STARTED IN 1985 THE USUAL REPORT, AS DISTINCT FROM THE LONGER COMMENTARIES GIVING THE CURRENT SOVIET LINE, HAS BEEN CONFINED TO STATING THE FACT OF A PLENARY OR SUB-GROUP MEETING AND ITS DATE. TASS OF 23 JANUARY, HOWEVER, REPORTED THAT A SERIES OF WORKING MEETINGS IN ALL THREE AREAS "WORK HAS BEGUN ON THE PREPARATION OF JOINT DRAFT DOCUMENTS" AND THAT "DETAILED DISCUSSIONS ARE BEING CONDUCTED". THE TASS REPORT AT THE END OF THE FOLLOWING WEEK'S WORK, ON 30 JANUARY, REFERRED TO THE CONTINUATION OF "INTENSIVE DISCUSSIONS" AND SAID THAT: "PROGRESS IS TAKING PLACE ON SEVERAL ASPECTS OF THE WORK ON AGREEING JOINT DRAFT DOCUMENTS".

Confidential

Confidential

4. COMBS INDICATED THAT THE AMERICANS COULD NOT BE SURE WHETHER WHAT WAS HAPPENING WAS TACTICS OR SUBSTANCE BUT THE SIGNS WERE ENCOURAGING BOTH IN GENEVA AND IN MOSCOW WHERE THERE HAD BEEN SOME TALK FOR EXAMPLE OF LIMITS BEING AGREED ON TESTING OF SDI ELEMENTS, EG LASERS. THE CURRENT VISIT TO MOSCOW OF THE DELEGATION FROM THE COUNCIL OF FOREIGN RELATIONS WHICH INCLUDES KISSINGER, VANCE AND BROWN WOULD TRY TO EXPLORE SOME OF THESE AVENUES FURTHER.

5. IF VORNOTSOV'S AIM WAS AS INDICATED THE TIME TABLE WOULD HAVE TO BE, ACCORDING TO COMBS, SUBMISSION OF A JOINT DOCUMENT TO MINISTERS BY THE END OF MARCH, IE AT ABOUT THE END OF THE CURRENT ROUND, WITH A SHULTZ/SHEVARDNADZE MEETING FOLLOWING IN EARLY SUMMER.

6. THE AMERICANS HOPED TO GET A CLEAR INDICATION OF SOVIET VIEWS NOW THAT VORONTSOV HAS RETURNED TO GENEVA. HE HAD TOLD THEM THAT HIS TRIP TO MOSCOW WAS TO REPORT TO THE LEADERSHIP ON PROGRESS AND TO RECEIVE NEW INSTRUCTIONS.

HEMANS

YYYY

MXHPAN 7642

US/SOVIET ARMS CONTROL TALKS
LIMITED PS
ACDD PS/LADY YOUNG
DEFENCE D
SOVIET D PS/MR RENTON
NEWS D PS/PUS
NAD MR DEREK THOMAS
EED SIR D GODDALL
WED MR RATFORD
PLANNING STAFF MR FALL
RES D MR FERN
INFO D MR BRAITHWAITE
PUSD MR SLATER
NED MR BARRINGTON
CSCE UNIT MR GILLMORE
POD MR REEVE

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION
ARMS CONTROL TALKS

COPIES TO:
MR BERMAN LEGAL ADVISERS
MR R A BURNS SAD

Confidential