

CONFIDENTIAL
FM WASHINGTON
TO PRIORITY FCO
TELNO 713
OF 110150Z MARCH 89
INFO PRIORITY BONN, PARIS, UKDEL NATO, UKDEL VIENNA, MOSCOW

OUR TELNO 636: BAKER/SHEVARDNADZE MEETING ON 7 MARCH
SUMMARY

1. AMERICAN ACCOUNT INDICATES MEETING WENT MUCH AS FORECAST. ATMOSPHERICS GOOD. BAKER PUT DOWN HIS MARKER ABOUT CENTRAL AMERICA AND SPOKE FORCEFULLY ON IRAN. AGREEMENT TO MEET AGAIN IN MOSCOW IN EARLY MAY. TIMING OF SUMMIT FOR DISCUSSION THEN. ARMS CONTROL POINTS IN MIFT.

DETAIL

2. VERSCHBOW (DIRECTOR, SOVIET OFFICE, STATE) BRIEFED WESTERN EMBASSIES ON 9 MARCH. THE US TEAM WERE SATISFIED WITH THE MEETING. SHEVARDNADZE TOO HAD DESCRIBED IT AS A GOOD BEGINNING. MORE GROUND HAD BEEN COVERED IN THE TWO HOURS AVAILABLE THAN US OFFICIALS HAD EXPECTED. THE TWO MINISTERS AGREED TO MEET IN MOSCOW FOR A FULL TWO-DAY MEETING IN EARLY MAY. BAKER HAD AGREED THAT A NUMBER OF EXPERTS SHOULD ATTEND THAT SESSION FOR WORKING GROUP DISCUSSIONS: BUT THE US HAD NOT YET DECIDED WHICH ISSUES WOULD BE RIPE FOR THIS TREATMENT IN MAY.

3. PRIVATE SESSION. VERSCHBOW SAID THAT THIS HAD LASTED FOR ALMOST AN HOUR (THE PLAN WAS FOR 15 MLNUTES). MUCH OF THE TIME WAS TAKEN UP BY A LONG EXPOSITION FROM SHEVARDNADZE ON PERESTROIKA AND THE LACK OF ALTERNATIVES TO IT. BAKER RESPONDED THAT PERESTROIKA WAS GOOD FOR THE SOVIET UNION AND FOR THE WORLD, BUT ITS SUCCESS WAS DEPENDENT ON SOVIET NOT US OR WESTERN ACTIONS. BAKER RAISED IRAN, UNDERLINING US DISQUIET ABOUT DISCUSSION OF ARMS SALES DURING SHEVARDNADZE'S VISIT TO TEHRAN. IT WAS HARD TO SQUARE THIS OLD-FASHIONED PURSUIT OF UNILATERAL ADVANTAGE WITH QUOTE NEW THINKING UNQUOTE. BAKER HAD EXPRESSED DISAPPOINTMENT THAT SHEVARDNADZE HAD FAILED TO RAISE RUSHDIE WITH KHOMEINI. BAKER ALSO MENTIONED CENTRAL AMERICA (AMPLIFYING THIS IN THE PLENARY SESSION: PARA 6(III)). AND SINO/SOVIET COMMENTING THAT THE US DID NOT SEE AN IMPROVEMENT IN SINO/SOVIET RELATIONS AS THREATENING.

4. PLENARY SESSION. BAKER OPENED WITH HUMAN RIGHTS. HE NOTED THE GENERALLY POSITIVE TREND IN SOVIET HUMAN RIGHTS PERFORMANCE OVER THE LAST YEAR. BUT SOME SERIOUS PROBLEMS REMAINED: THERE HAD BEEN A SLOW-DOWN IN THE RESOLUTION OF CASES: SOME NEW

REFUSENIK CASES HAD ARISEN: AND THE POLITICAL ARTICLES OF THE CRIMINAL CODE APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN USED IN THE ARREST OF THE KARABAKH COMMITTEE. THE US WERE WATCHING WITH INTEREST FOR THE PUBLICATION OF THE NEW LAWS ON EMIGRATION, FREEDOM OF PRESS AND RELIGION. THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION WERE WILLING TO CONTINUE THE PRACTICE OF ROUND-TABLE DISCUSSIONS WITH SOVIET EXPERTS ON THE RULE OF LAW. ON THE MOSCOW HUMAN RIGHTS CONFERENCE, THE US PLANNED TO ATTEND, BUT A FINAL DECISION WOULD BE CONTINGENT ON CONTINUED IMPROVEMENT IN THE SOVIET HUMAN RIGHTS PERFORMANCE.

5. SHEVARDNADZE RESPONDED THAT THE IMPROVEMENTS WOULD CONTINUE. HE WOULD LIKE TO SEE WORK ON THE NEW LAWS ACCELERATED, BUT THIS WAS A COMPLICATED AREA, AND MUCH CONSULTATION WAS NECESSARY. HE TOOK ISSUE WITH BAKER'S COMMENTS ON THE KARABAKH COMMITTEE. THIS HAD BEEN A QUESTION OF UPHOLDING THE RULE OF LAW. BUT HE UNDERTOOK TO LOOK INTO THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THE POLITICAL ARTICLES HAD BEEN USED. ON THE US LIST OF SPECIFIC CASES, HE UNDERTOOK TO CONSIDER THESE. CASES WOULD BE RESOLVED WHERE POSSIBLE: IT WAS LEGITIMATE FOR BAKER TO RAISE THEM. HE SUGGESTED THAT GIVEN CONSTANT US QUESTIONING ABOUT INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE SOVIET UNION, THERE SHOULD BE A NEW US/SOVIET WORKING GROUP ON INTERNAL POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN BOTH COUNTRIES. THIS COULD INCLUDE ACADEMICS FROM BOTH SIDES (VERSCHBOW COMMENTED THAT THE US WERE STILL CONSIDERING HOW TO RESPOND TO THIS IDEA).

6. REGIONAL ISSUES. BAKER SUGGESTED A MORE INTENSE FOCUS ON A NUMBER OF THE MOST PRESSING REGIONAL PROBLEMS AND AGREED TO CONTINUE THE PRACTICE OF PERIODIC ASSISTANT SECRETARY LEVEL MEETINGS ON EACH OF THE REGIONAL AREAS. THERE HAD BEEN NO DISCUSSION OF EASTERN EUROPE. OTHER MAIN POINTS AS FOLLOWS:

(I) AFGHANISTAN. BAKER TOOK THE STANDARD LINE THAT THE US DID NOT SEEK AN ANTI-SOVIET AFGHANISTAN, BUT SUPPORTED SELF-DETERMINATION. SHEVARDNADZE PRESSED FOR A CUT-OFF OF ARMS SUPPLIES BY BOTH SIDES AND AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE. BAKER RESPONDED THAT NEGATIVE SYMMETRY ON ARMS SUPPLIES WAS NO LONGER OF ANY VALUE, GIVEN THE LARGE STOCKS OF ARMS INSIDE THE COUNTRY. HE DID NOT RESPOND ON THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE POINT.

(II) CENTRAL AMERICA. BAKER SAID THAT THE US HAD NEVER REGARDED SOVIET ARMS SUPPLIES TO NICARAGUA AS LEGITIMATE. THE US HAD NOTED AN INCREASE IN 1988. THERE WAS EVEN LESS REASON FOR THIS NOW GIVEN THAT THE US WERE NOT SUPPLYING MILITARY AID TO THE CONTRAS. SHEVARDNADZE'S RESPONSE HAD BEEN DISAPPOINTING: HE TROTTED OUT GORBACHEV'S PROPOSAL AT THE 1987 SUMMIT THAT THE SOVIET UNION WOULD CUT OFF ARMS SUPPLIES TO NICARAGUA IF THE US CEASED MILITARY AID TO THE REGION. BAKER DISPUTED THAT THIS

CONSTITUTED RECIPROCITY. HE UNDERLINED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ISSUE FOR THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION: THE WAY IN WHICH THE US RESPONDED WOULD HAVE AN EFFECT ON THE OVERALL RELATIONSHIP.

(III) ARAB/ISRAEL. SHEVARDNADZE SAID THAT THE US AND THE SOVIET UNION BOTH HAD IMPORTANT ROLES TO PLAY. HE PRESSED FOR EARLY JOINT EFFORTS TO PREPARE FOR AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AND SUGGESTED A DISCUSSION IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL AT FOREIGN MINISTER LEVEL IN SEPTEMBER. BAKER WELCOMED THE INCREASED SOVIET INTEREST IN MIDDLE EAST PEACE EFFORTS. HE HOPED THAT THE TWO SIDES COULD WORK TOGETHER. THE TIME WAS NOT HOWEVER RIGHT FOR AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE. WITHOUT A LOT OF WORK PREPARING THE GROUND IN ADVANCE, THROUGH BILATERAL CONTACTS WITH THE PARTIES, A CONFERENCE COULD DRIVE THE PARTIES FURTHER APART. HE DID NOT RULE IT OUT AT SOME STAGE, BUT IT WAS NOT AN END IN ITSELF.

7. TRANS-NATIONAL ISSUES. LITTLE TIME FOR DISCUSSION ON THIS OCCASION, BUT THE TWO SIDES AGREED TO INCLUDE ON THE AGENDA FOR THE MAY MEETING: TERRORISM (WITH A PRIOR EXPERTS LEVEL MEETING). THE ENVIRONMENT, DISASTER RELIEF AND NARCOTICS. SHEVARDNADZE SUGGESTED THAT ECONOMIC ISSUES MIGHT BE DISCUSSED UNDER THIS HEADING AT SOME STAGE.

8. BILATERAL ISSUES. THE TWO SIDES TOUCHED VERY BRIEFLY ON A NUMBER OF BILATERAL AGREEMENTS CURRENTLY UNDER NEGOTIATION, INCLUDING THE PROPOSED EXCHANGE OF CULTURAL CENTRES IN MOSCOW AND WASHINGTON. BAKER RAISED ALLIED CONCERNS ABOUT THE RECENT BERLIN WALL ESCAPE INCIDENTS AND URGED THE SOVIET UNION TO USE ITS INFLUENCE WITH THE EAST GERMANS TO PREVENT A RECURRENCE.

9. SEE MIFT FOR ARMS CONTROL POINTS.

ACLAND

YYYY

DISTRIBUTION

172

MAIN

163

.EAST WEST US/SOVIET RELATIONS
LIMITED
SOVIET
DEFENCE
SEC POL
RESEARCH
PLANNERS

CSCE UNIT
PROTOCOL
PS
PS/LORD GLENARTHUR
PS/MR WALDEGRAVE
PS/MR EGGAR
PS/PUS

CONFIDENTIAL

654
MDLIAN 4286

EED
SEAD
NAD
WED
ACDD
SAD
SEND
NEWS
INFO
ECD(E)
POD
FED
PUSD

PS/SIR J FRETWELL
CHIEF CLERK
MR BAYNE
MR BOYD
MR MUNRO
MR GILLMORE
MR RATFORD
MR GOULDEN
MR FEARN
MISS PESTELL
MR WINCHESTER
MR KERR

ADDITIONAL 9

~~PS/PM~~
PRESS SEC/PM
MR D NICHOLLS DUS (P) MOD
D.NUC(POL) SY MOD

DACU MOD
CDI MOD
MR P J WESTON CAB OFF
SIR P CRADOCK 2 COPIES

NNNN

PAGE 4
CONFIDENTIAL