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FM AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2087

SECRET SECTION 1 OF 2 HELSINKI 1321

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SALT 015

DEPT PLEASE PASS US MISSION NATO AND AMEMBASSY MOSCOW AS INFO ROUTINE

SUBJECT: SALT: NOV 18 SESSION

SUMMARY: AT A MEETING IN THE US MEMBASSY HELSINKI, THE PRELIMINARY SALT TALKS ENTERED THEIR SUBSTANTIVE PHASE WITH AN EXCHANGE OF FORMAL OPENING STATEMENTS BY SMITH AND SEMENOV. SEMENOV'S STATEMENT WAS MODERATE AND CONSTRUCTIVE IN TONE, THOUGH DEVOID OF ANY CONCRETE PROPOSALS OTHER THAN A SUGGESTION THAT THE TWO SIDES ISSUE A JOINT COMMUNIQUE AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE PRELIMINARY TALKS. SEMENOV INDICATED THAT THE PURPOSE OF THE TALKS SHOULD BE TO DEFINE THE SCOPE OF THE PROBLEMS TO BE DISCUSSED DURING THE SUBSEQUENT PHASE. HOWEVER, HE INDICATED THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD BE WILLING TO CONSIDER VARIOUS APPROACHES TO THIS END, NOTING WITH INTEREST THE INTENTION OF THE US SIDE TO TABLE ILLUSTRATIVE BASIC ELEMENTS OF AN ARMS LIMITATION ARRANGEMENT. THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD AT THE SOVIET EMBASSY ON THURSDAY, NOV 20. END OF SUMMARY.

1. SMITH OPENED THE MEETING BY READING THE US "OPENING STATEMENT." THE TEXT AS DELIVERED WAS THE SAME AS THAT GIVEN IN TOSALT 005 EXCEPT FOR SEVERAL MINOR EDITORIAL CHANGES AND THE DELETION OF THE WORD "EXISTING" IN PARA 2. AT THE CONCLUSION OF HIS STATEMENT, SMITH GAVE A COURTESY COPY OF IT TO SEMENOV.

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SECRET 22

U.S. ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT AGENCY
Declass/Release () in whole
by F. Smith Date JUN 27 1987

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2. IN HIS BRIEF COMMENTS ON THE US STATEMENT SEMENOV SAID THAT HE HAD LISTENED TO IT ATTENTIVELY, THAT IT TAKES UP A VARIETY OF COMPLEX QUESTIONS, AND WILL BE THOROUGHLY STUDIED. HE EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT IN THE COURSE OF FURTHER DISCUSSIONS HE WOULD HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO GET A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE US POSITION. SEMENOV THEN READ THE SOVIET OPENING STATEMENT.

3. GENERALLY DEVOID OF SPECIFICS, THE SOVIET STATEMENT WAS MODERATE AND CONSTRUCTIVE IN TONE. WHILE MAKING AN OCCASIONAL NOD TO THE PEACEFUL PURPOSES OF SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY AND TO RADICAL DISARMAMENT GOALS, THE STATEMENT GENERALLY STUCK TO ISSUE OF STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATIONS. THE FOLLOWING ARE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE STATEMENT (TEXT SENT SEPTEL):

A. THESE TALKS ON CURBING THE STRATEGIC ARMS RACE DO NOT START FROM SCRATCH. IN EARLIER EXCHANGES OF VIEWS BETWEEN OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS, GENERAL PRINCIPLES WERE LAID OUT WHICH COULD PROVIDE A BASIS FOR LIMITING OFFENSIVE AND DEFENSIVE STRATEGIC WEAPONS.

B. THE SLOWING DOWN OF THE STRATEGIC ARMS RACE WILL AFFECT FAVORABLY THE OVERALL WORLD SITUATION, WHILE STEPPING IT UP COULD LEAD TO TENSION. ARMS COMPETITION AT THIS TIME CAN ONLY INCREASE THE THREAT OF WAR.

C. THIS IS NOT THE PLACE TO EXPLORE THE CAUSES OF THE ARMS COMPETITION OR TO DETERMINE WHO BEARS RESPONSIBILITY FOR IT. WE HAVE OUR POINT OF VIEW, AND YOU HAVE YOURS.

D. IT IS KNOWN THAT BOTH THE US AND THE USSR POSSESS MORE THAN ENOUGH WEAPONS TO BRING CATASTROPHE TO MANKIND. EVEN IF ONE COUNTRY ATTACKS FIRST, IT WOULD BE THE VICTIM OF A CRUSHING RETALIATORY BLOW. IT WOULD BE SUICIDE TO THE COUNTRY WHO BEGAN THE WAR.

E. STOCKPILING NUCLEAR WEAPONS DOES NOT ADD TO EITHER COUNTRY'S SECURITY BUT DIMINISHES IT, BECAUSE THE DANGER OF A NUCLEAR WAR MOUNTS. WEAPONS BECOME OBSOLETE, LEADING TO WASTEFULNESS, THUS SPIRALING UPWARDS.

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F. BECAUSE OF THE COMPLEXITY OF THE STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIP THERE IS A DANGER OF GRAVE MISCALCULATION. MOREOVER, THE STRATEGIC SITUATION TODAY DOES NOT ELIMINATE THE RISK OF WAR THROUGH UNAUTHORIZED USE OR THROUGH DELIBERATE PROVOCATION BY A THIRD NUCLEAR POWER.

G. BECAUSE OF THE UNIQUE SITUATION OF THE TWO MAJOR POWERS A SOLUTION OF CURBING THE STRATEGIC ARMS RACE DEPENDS PRIMARILY ON OUR TWO COUNTRIES, ALTHOUGH WE HAVE TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THIRD COUNTRIES AS WELL.

H. TO ACHIEVE POSITIVE RESULTS, BOTH US AND USSR MUST BE EQUALLY INTERESTED IN DISCUSSING THE PROBLEM BEFORE US AND MUST NOT INTRODUCE ANY EXTRANEOUS ISSUES WHICH WOULD COMPLICATE THE TALKS ON AN ALREADY COMPLEX PROBLEM. IF WE SUCCEED IN ACHIEVING TANGIBLE RESULTS, IT WILL CREATE BETTER RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES AND FURTHER WORLD PEACE. HOWEVER, IT WOULD HARDLY FACILITATE OUR GOAL IF THE TALKS WERE TIED TO OTHER INTERNATIONAL ISSUES. THE STRATEGIC ARMS PROBLEM IS SO INVOLVED THAT TO DO THIS WOULD LEAD TO AN IMPASSE AND COULD EVEN LEAD TO RESULTS DIRECTLY OPPOSITE TO THOSE DESIRED.

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FM AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2088

0 E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 HELSINKI 1321

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SALTO 015

DEPT PLEASE PASS US MISSION NATD AND AMEMBASSY MOSCOW AS
INFO ROUTINE

I. THE SOVIET SIDE IS PREPARED TO MOVE FORWARD STEP BY
STEP, BUT WE CANNOT EXPECT MIRACLES. A PROBLEM OF SUCH
COMPLEXITY CANNOT BE RESOLVED IN A FEW MEETINGS. WE WILL STRIVE
TO BRING THE TWO POSITIONS CLOSER TOGETHER, BUILDING
UNDERSTANDING.

J. BEFORE UNDERTAKING THE SUBSEQUENT SUBSTANTIVE TALKS,
IT IS NECESSARY TO RESOLVE THE PRELIMINARY PROBLEMS.
ABOVE ALL WE NEED TO DEFINE THE SCOPE OF THE PROBLEMS TO BE
DISCUSSED AT THE SUBSEQUENT TALKS. VARIOUS APPROACHES ARE
POSSIBLE; WE CAN BEGIN WITH GENERAL CONSIDERATION OF THE WHOLE
COMPLEX OF QUESTIONS, WE CAN EXAMINE THE PROBLEM PART BY PART,
BY ELEMENT, OR THERE CAN BE A COMBINATION APPROACH. AT
THIS POINT, SEMENOV SAID, IN AN EVIDENT DEPARTURE FROM
HIS PREPARED TEXT, THAT HE NOTED WITH INTEREST THAT
THE US SIDE WAS PREPARED TO TABLE "ILLUSTRATIVE BASIC
ELEMENTS" AS CITED IN SMITH'S SPEECH. SEMENOV CONTINUED
ON WITH HIS PREPARED REMARKS TO SAY THAT EITHER DELEGATION CAN
RAISE ANYTHING IT WISHES.

K. SOME ISSUES HAVE ALREADY BEEN IDENTIFIED IN PREVIOUS
CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS. WE SHOULD SEEK TO
DEFINE THE MORE IMPORTANT PROBLEMS ON WHICH TO CONCENTRATE
ATTENTION. WE SHOULD CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY OF A FINAL
COMMUNIQUE OF THESE PRELIMINARY TALKS BASED ON THESE

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AIM OF THE PRELIMINARY TALKS -- DEFINING THE "SCOPE" OF THE SUBSEQUENT PHASE. HOWEVER, IN HIS LATER DEPARTURE FROM HIS PREPARED TEXT, ACCEPTING DISCUSSION OF THE US "ILLUSTRATIVE BASIC ELEMENTS," HE SEEMED TO BE PREPARED TO BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES AT LEAST IN TERMS OF IDENTIFYING THE WEAPONS SYSTEMS AND PERHAPS KINDS OF LIMITATIONS TO BE DISCUSSED DURING THE LATER PHASE. IN ANY EVENT, WE EXPECT THAT SOVIETS WILL WAIT FOR THE US SIDE TO MOVE FIRST WITH ANY SUBSTANTIVE SUGGESTIONS, WHETHER "ILLUSTRATIVE" OR HOWEVER LABELLED.

8. WE NOTE WITH PARTICULAR INTEREST SEMENOV'S STATEMENT THAT NUCLEAR WAR WOULD BE MUTUAL DISASTER AND WOULD CONSTITUTE SUICIDE FOR THE INITIATOR, AND HIS POINTED REFERENCE TO THE NTH COUNTRY PROBLEM.

9. IN RAISING THE QUESTION OF A COMMUNIQUE IN THE CONTEXT OF PREVIOUS US-SOVIET EXCHANGES, SEMENOV SEEMED TO BE DREDGING UP THE "OBJECTIVE AND PRINCIPLES" EXERCISE. HOWEVER, HE ALSO SEEMED TO BACK OFF UNDER SMITH'S QUESTIONING.
SMITH

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