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FM WASHINGTON 192330Z MAR 85

TO PRIORITY F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 970 DATED 19 MARCH

INFO PRIORITY UKDEL NATO, UKDIS GENEVA, MODUK (FOR DUSP AND DACU),
ROUTINE BONN, PARIS, MOSCOW.

ARMS CONTROL: US/SOVIET NEGOTIATIONS IN GENEVA. *mt*

SUMMARY

1. LITTLE SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSION SO FAR. BUT AGREEMENT THAT THE THREE NEGOTIATING GROUPS SHOULD BEGIN MEETING SEPARATELY NEXT WEEK. ALSO AGREEMENT ON DATES FOR THE END OF THIS ROUND (23 APRIL) AND THE BEGINNING OF THE NEXT (30 MAY).

DETAIL

2. THE US/SOVIET ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS OPENED AS PLANNED IN GENEVA ON 12 MARCH WITH A MEETING BETWEEN HEADS OF DELEGATION. KARPOV REPRESENTED THE RUSSIANS: KAMPELMAN, TOWER AND GLITMAN WERE PRESENT ON THE US SIDE. OUR STATE DEPARTMENT AND ACDA CONTACTS SAY THAT THIS MEETING WAS LARGELY A FORMALITY.

3. THE FIRST PLENARY MEETING WAS HELD ON 14 MARCH. WE UNDERSTAND THAT KARPOV DELIVERED A TOUGH STATEMENT WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS HAVING BEEN APPROVED AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS IN MOSCOW. ON DEFENCE/SPACE, KARPOV SAID THAT THE QUOTE IMPLEMENTATION OF SDI DEPLOYMENTS UNQUOTE WOULD RENDER THE NEGOTIATIONS USELESS. ON INF, HE SAID THAT THE CONTINUED DEPLOYMENT OF INF IN EUROPE WOULD PLACE GREAT STRAIN ON THE NEGOTIATIONS AND BE INCONSISTENT WITH THE OBJECTIVES AGREED BETWEEN SHULTZ AND GROHYKO ON 7-8 JANUARY. HIS STATEMENT APPARENTLY CONTAINED NOTHING OF INTEREST ON STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE SYSTEMS.

4. A SECOND PLENARY MEETING WAS HELD IN GENEVA ON 19 MARCH (WE HAVE NO DETAILS YET) AND A THIRD WILL BE HELD ON 21 JANUARY. THERE ARE AT PRESENT NO PLANS FOR FURTHER PLENARY MEETINGS THEREAFTER.

5. IT WAS AGREED BETWEEN THE TWO DELEGATIONS ON 14 MARCH THAT THE THREE NEGOTIATING GROUPS SHOULD HOLD THEIR FIRST SEPARATE MEETINGS NEXT WEEK. FINAL DETAILS ARE STILL TO BE AGREED BUT IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT EACH GROUP WILL MEET TWICE A WEEK. FINAL DETAILS ARE STILL TO BE AGREED BUT IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT EACH GROUP WILL MEET TWICE A WEEK. THE RUSSIANS HAVE SAID THAT THE GROUPS SHOULD NOT MEET SIMULTANEOUSLY.

6. OFFICIALS HERE ARE MILDLY ENCOURAGED BY DEVELOPMENTS IN GENEVA SO FAR AND, IN PARTICULAR, BY THE RELATIVE EASE WITH WHICH IT HAS BEEN AGREED THAT THE THREE NEGOTIATING GROUPS SHOULD BEGIN TO MEET

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SEPARATELY (THE RUSSIANS PROPOSED 6 PRECEDING PLENARY MEETINGS, THE US DELEGATION PROPOSED NONE, AND A COMPROMISE OF 3 WAS REACHED WITHOUT UNDUE DIFFICULTY). THE ONLY DISCORDANT NOTE SO FAR WAS WHEN SHULTZ EXPRESSED CONCERN IN A TELEVISION INTERVIEW ON 17 MARCH ABOUT AN INTERVIEW GIVEN BY KARPOV TO SOVIET TELEVISION ON 15 MARCH. SHULTZ COMMENTED THAT HE HOPED KARPOV'S INTERVIEW DID NOT MEAN THAT THE RUSSIANS WOULD NOT RESPECT THE CONFIDENTIALITY RULES WHICH THE ADMINISTRATION HOPED WOULD GUIDE NEGOTIATIONS IN GENEVA. SUBSEQUENT TASS COMMENT ABOUT THE NEGOTIATIONS HAS ALSO BEEN VIEWED WITH SOME DISAPPOINT, BUT NOT MUCH SURPRISE, HERE.

7. THE DELEGATIONS HAVE ALSO AGREED THAT THE FIRST ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD FINISH ON 23 APRIL AND THE SECOND ROUND BEGIN ON 30 MAY.

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