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Authority NND 981511
By WPP NARA Date 8/2/00



Department of State

TELEGRAM
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MODIS/SALT

SUBJECT: ABM BAN

1. SEMENOV HAS INFORMED SMITH THAT HIS INSTRUCTIONS ARE TO WORK WITH THE U.S. DELEGATION TO SEE IF AN ABM BAN IS A REALISTIC PROPOSITION. HE ALSO STATES THAT HIS PLENARY STATEMENTS AT HELSINKI HAVE BEEN TAILORED SO AS NOT TO RULE OUT AN ABM BAN OUTCOME.

2. SOVIET DELEGATE TIMERBAEV HAS STATED IN INFORMAL CONVERSION THAT IN RECENT MONTHS THERE HAS BEEN A CHANGE IN SOVIET ATTITUDE TOWARD ZERO. KISHILOV HAS ASKED WHY THE UNITED STATES DID NOT MAKE A SPECIFIC PROPOSAL IF WE ARE REALLY INTERESTED IN AN ABM BAN, AND TIMERBAEV HAS URGED U.S. TO TABLE A BAN PROPOSAL. TIMERBAEV HAS ALSO STATED THAT MOSCOW WOULD WANT TO KNOW U.S. VIEWS ON WHEN AND HOW EXISTING FACILITIES WOULD BE DISMANTLED.

3. UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, DELEGATION (EXCEPT FOR GENERAL ALLISON) BELIEVES THAT WE SHOULD PROMPTLY TABLE A PROPOSAL FOR A BAN. DELEGATION WILL PREPARE DRAFT OF A BAN

PROPOSAL ALONG LINES TRACKING THE AUGUST 4 BAN PROPOSAL AS MODIFIED BY THE APPROPRIATE ABM CHANGES IN NSDM-117 AND NSDM-120. TIMING AND TACTICS FOR PRESENTING A BAN IN RELATION TO SAFEGUARD/MOSCOW ALTERNATIVE WILL ALSO BE SUBJECT OF FURTHER DELEGATION RECOMMENDATION.

4. AS WE SEE IT, ARGUMENTS FOR AN ABM BAN WHICH WE COULD ADVANCE IN SUPPORT OF SUCH A PROPOSAL ARE:

(A) IT COULD PROVIDE GREATER ASSURANCE OF STABILITY IN THE STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN US, THUS REDUCING PRESSURES FOR ADDITIONAL OFFENSIVE SYSTEMS.

(B) IT WOULD RESULT IN A REDUCTION OF DEFENSIVE WEAPON SYSTEMS RATHER THAN A PARTIAL BUILDUP AS AUTHORIZED BY OTHER PROPOSALS UNDER CONSIDERATION. IT COULD LAY THE FOUNDATION FOR MUTUAL PHASED REDUCTIONS IN OFFENSIVE SYSTEMS AS WELL.

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(C) IT COULD MAKE SUBSEQUENT NEGOTIATIONS FOR MORE COMPLETE LIMITATIONS ON OFFENSIVE SYSTEMS MORE PRODUCTIVE.

(D) IT WOULD PERMIT GREATER RESOURCE ALLOCATION TO CIVIL PURPOSES.

(E) IF SUCH A BAN WERE AGREED IN PRINCIPLE, THE DETAILS THEREOF SHOULD BE EASIER TO NEGOTIATE THAN A LIMITATION WHICH WOULD BAN SOME ACTIONS IN THE ABM FIELD AND AUTHORIZE OTHERS.

(F) IT WOULD BE MORE RESPONSIVE TO THE OBLIGATIONS OF ARTICLE VI OF THE NPT.

5. IT SHOULD BE RECOGNIZED THAT THERE ARE SOME NEGATIVE FACTORS:

(A) IT COULD INCREASE THE VULNERABILITY TO ACCIDENTAL, UNAUTHORIZED, OR THIRD COUNTRY LAUNCH OF THE NATIONAL COMMAND AUTHORITY OF THE COUNTRY OR COUNTRIES WHICH OTHERWISE MIGHT HAVE CHOSEN A DEFENSE OF ITS CAPITAL.

(B) IT COULD INCREASE THE VULNERABILITY OF CERTAIN OF THE RETALIATORY FORCES OF THE COUNTRY OR COUNTRIES WHICH OTHERWISE MIGHT HAVE CHOSEN A LIMITED DEFENSE LOCATED AT ITS ICBM SITES.

6. GENERAL ALLISON DOES NOT CONCUR. HE RECOMMENDS AGAINST A U.S. ABM DEPLOYMENT BAN PROPOSAL, AND BELIEVES THAT THE QUESTIONS OF WHETHER AN ABM BAN IS IN THE SECURITY INTEREST OF THE U.S. AND WHETHER U.S. INTERESTS ARE SERVED BY RAISING THIS MATTER AGAIN IN SALT AFTER IT HAS BEEN REJECTED BY THE SOVIETS WARRANT RECONSIDERATION IN LIGHT OF DEVELOPMENTS. HIS VIEWS ON THESE MATTERS AND ON THE POINTS RAISED IN PARAS. 3 AND 4 FOLLOW.

(A) FROM THE STANDPOINT OF LONG-TERM SECURITY FOR THE U.S. OUR CURRENT EFFORTS TO NEGOTIATE A STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATION AGREEMENT SHOULD BE VIEWED AS A FIRST STEP IN A STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS TO ESTABLISH A NEW RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SUPERPOWERS. ASSUMING THAT THERE IS A MUTUALITY OF INTEREST IN PURSUING SOUNDLY BASED STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATIONS, NEITHER SIDE SHOULD WISH TO SEEK IN A FIRST STEP SOME DRAMATIC MEASURE WHICH MAY HAVE AS YET UNREALIZED CONSEQUENCES FOR THE NATION'S SECURITY. AN ABM DEPLOYMENT BAN FALLS IN THIS CATEGORY.

(B) TO FOREGO COMPLETELY ANY ABM DEFENSE OF U.S. WOULD HAVE LONG TERM ADVERSE PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACTS ON THE U.S. PUBLIC AND AS THESE ATTITUDES ARE TRANSMITTED TO DECISION MAKERS, COULD HAVE ADVERSE IMPACTS ON U.S. WORLDWIDE POSTURE AND THE CONDUCT OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS.

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(G) WITH RESPECT TO PARAGRAPHS 4(C), AND (E) ABOVE, THESE ARE VALUE JUDGMENTS WITH WHICH GENERAL ALLISON DOES NOT AGREE. A BAN ON ABM DEPLOYMENTS IS NOT LIKELY TO BE MORE EASILY DEFINED AND NEGOTIATED THAN ARE ABM LIMITATIONS ALONG THE LINES PROPOSED BY THE U.S. ON JULY 27. IN THE BROAD CONTEXT, VERIFICATION DIFFICULTIES AND OUR CONCERN REGARDING SAM UPGRADE WOULD NOT BE SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCED BY AN ABM BAN. IN THE DESCRIPTION OF AN ABM BAN WHICH WE PROVIDED THE SOVIETS IN THE AUGUST 4 PROPOSAL, WE PERMIT SOVIET RETENTION OF EARLY WARNING AND SEARCH RADARS (HEN HOUSES)--AND THE SOVIET AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM WITH ITS RADARS REMAINS UNCONSTRAINED. THUS, THE DEFINITION AND DISTINGUISHABILITY PROBLEMS REMAIN.

(H) FINALLY, REGENERATION OF THE PREVIOUSLY REJECTED ABM BAN PROPOSAL MAY CONFUSE THE NEGOTIATION ATMOSPHERE AND PREJUDICE OUR OPPORTUNITIES AT A TIME WHEN WE ARE PLACING ON THE TABLE REALISTIC FIRST-STEP AGREEMENTS WHICH ARE SOUNDLY BASED ON THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS TO DATE. THE SOVIETS HAVE PROCEEDED THUS FAR IN SALT AT A CAREFUL, CAUTIOUS, MEASURED PACE--GIVING EVERY EVIDENCE THAT THEY BELIEVE THAT IF PROGRESS IS TO BE MADE IT SHOULD BE ON A STEP-BY-STEP BASIS WITH THE FIRST AGREEMENT CONSTITUTING THE FIRST STEP IN CONTINUING LONG-TERM STRATEGIC ARMS NEGOTIATIONS. A SHIFT OF EMPHASIS TO A ZERO LEVEL OF BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENSE WOULD BE A SHARP DEPARTURE. SMITH
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