



TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

2

finish; they would simply have to pay the price for those that were not finished by then. I said as soon as he was authorized to discuss these issues concretely I would be prepared on my side with a formal position.

Dobrynin then asked me how we were going to conclude the SALT arrangement if he and I talked. I said if he and I could agree in principle to proceed along the lines that we had discussed, -- that is to say, a formal ABM agreement coupled with an offensive freeze -- then I would suggest that the President make a speech early in March in which he puts forward this as an idea and the Soviet Union could respond to it positively. Vienna would then implement the agreement. Dobrynin asked whether we would, together with the speech, plan a formal demarche to the Soviet Government. I said we had really not thought the matter through, and we would be very receptive to their suggestion. Dobrynin said that, given the way the Soviet bureaucracy worked, it would be helpful to have a formal record in addition to whatever the President might say publicly, and to have that formal material part of the record before the speech was made. I said I did not believe this would present an insuperable obstacle.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE