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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

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February 21, 1986

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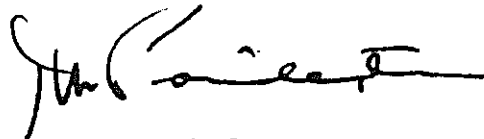
MEMORANDUM FOR THE HONORABLE GEORGE P. SHULTZ  
The Secretary of State

SUBJECT: Transmission of Geneva Material (S)

Attached is a Presidential letter to Allied and friendly Heads of Government (TAB A) and instruction cables to the NST Delegation in Geneva (TAB B) conveying the President's decision on a response to Gorbachev's arms control proposals. (S)

If we can get the Allied cable out this evening, we will have completed all consultation and be in a position to transmit a letter to General Secretary Gorbachev tomorrow. We would like to send out the instructions to the NST Delegation so that Max Kampelman has the maximum time to prepare for next week. (S)

FOR THE PRESIDENT:



John M. Poindexter

Attachments:

TAB A Presidential Letter  
TAB B Instruction Cables

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DEAR:

- (LONDON: I HAVE READ WITH GREAT CARE AND INTEREST YOUR COMMENTS ON MY INITIAL THOUGHTS CONCERNING A POSSIBLE MOVE IN GENEVA. AS ALWAYS, YOU HAVE CUT DIRECTLY TO THE BASIC ISSUES AT HAND, AND PROVIDED ME WITH BOTH EXCELLENT ADVICE AND PERSONAL SUPPORT. I WANT TO ASSURE YOU THAT THE POINTS THAT YOU RAISED ON THE NEED BOTH TO REJECT SOVIET EFFORTS TO CONSTRAIN BRITISH NUCLEAR FORCES AND TO MAINTAIN THE CREDIBILITY OF NATO'S CURRENT NUCLEAR DETERRENT CAPABILITY HAVE ALWAYS BEEN VERY MUCH IN MY MIND.)

- (USNATO: I HAVE READ WITH GREAT CARE AND INTEREST YOUR LETTER AND FOUND YOUR SUGGESTIONS BOTH TIMELY AND THOUGHTFUL. I CONTINUE TO VALUE HIGHLY BOTH YOUR ADVICE AND YOUR STRONG LEADERSHIP WITHIN NATO.)

- (THE HAGUE: I HAVE READ WITH GREAT CARE AND INTEREST YOUR LETTER, WHICH SERVED AS A USEFUL SUPPLEMENT TO AMBASSADOR NITZE'S REPORT OF HIS RECENT CONVERSATIONS WITH YOU IN THE HAGUE. I AM PARTICULARLY CONSCIOUS OF THE DIFFICULT POLITICAL DECISIONS THAT YOUR GOVERNMENT HAS TAKEN IN SUPPORT OF THE ALLIANCE'S DUAL TRACK DECISION. FOR THAT REASON, THE WORDS IN YOUR RECENT LETTER HAVE CARRIED SPECIAL WEIGHT WITH ME.)

- (ROME, BRUSSELS: AMBASSADOR NITZE HAS REPORTED TO ME ON HIS RECENT CONVERSATIONS WITH YOU. YOUR COMMENTS HAVE BEEN PARTICULARLY HELPFUL FOR ME. AS ALWAYS, I WAS ESPECIALLY GRATEFUL FOR YOUR EXPRESSIONS OF PERSONAL SUPPORT.)

- (PARIS: AMBASSADOR NITZE HAS REPORTED TO ME ON HIS RECENT CONVERSATIONS IN PARIS WITH FOREIGN MINISTER DUMAS AND OTHER MEMBERS OF YOUR GOVERNMENT. WE HIGHLY VALUE THIS OPPORTUNITY FOR A FULL AND CANDID EXCHANGE ON THESE ISSUES, AND WE INTEND TO CONTINUE SUCH DISCUSSIONS IN THE FUTURE. I WANT TO ASSURE YOU THAT THE POINTS THAT MINISTER DUMAS RAISED ON THE NEED TO REJECT SOVIET EFFORTS TO CONSTRAIN FRENCH NUCLEAR FORCES HAVE ALWAYS BEEN VERY MUCH IN MY MIND.)

- (BONN: I HAVE READ YOUR LETTERS COMMENTING ON MY INITIAL THOUGHTS ABOUT A POSSIBLE MOVE IN GENEVA WITH GREAT CARE AND INTEREST. AMBASSADOR NITZE HAS ALSO REPORTED TO ME ON HIS USEFUL DISCUSSIONS ON THIS TOPIC IN BONN AND AT NATO.)

- (COPENHAGEN: THANK YOU FOR YOUR LETTER. IT WAS A USEFUL SUPPLEMENT TO AMBASSADOR NITZE'S RECENT DISCUSSIONS AT NATO. AS ALWAYS, I VERY MUCH APPRECIATED YOUR THOUGHTFUL IDEAS AND PERSONAL SUPPORT.)

- (FOR REMAINING NATO ADDRESSEES: AMBASSADOR NITZE HAS REPORTED TO ME ON HIS RECENT CONSULTATIONS AT NATO.)

- (TOKYO: YOUR LETTER OF FEBRUARY 10th, TOGETHER WITH THE DETAILED PROPOSAL OUTLINED HERE BY AMBASSADOR MATSUNAGA AND THE

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VERY PRODUCTIVE CONVERSATIONS HELD BY AMBASSADOR ROWNY IN TOKYO, MADE A PROFOUND IMPRESSION HERE. AS YOU KNOW, I VALUE HIGHLY YOUR PERSONAL SUPPORT.)

- (CANBERRA: I FOUND YOUR LETTER OF FEBRUARY 13 MOST HELPFUL FOR OUR DELIBERATIONS ON A POSSIBLE MOVE IN GENEVA.)

- (SEOUL, BEIJING: AMBASSADOR ROWNY HAS REPORTED TO ME ON THE SUBSTANCE OF HIS CONVERSATIONS DURING HIS RECENT VISIT TO (SEOUL) (BEIJING).

- THESE EXCHANGES HAVE RECONFIRMED FOR ME THE SPECIAL VALUE OF QUIET, CANDID DIALOGUE ON THESE BASIC ISSUES OF COMMON CONCERN. FOR MY PART, I WELCOMED THE IDEAS AND INSIGHTS THAT WE HAVE RECEIVED AS A RESULT OF THESE CONSULTATIONS. THEY HAVE SERVED AS USEFUL CONTRIBUTIONS TO MY OWN THINKING.

- THROUGHOUT THESE RECENT CONSULTATIONS, I WAS IMPRESSED BY THE CONTINUED STRENGTH OF SUPPORT FOR OUR BASIC ARMS CONTROL OBJECTIVES AND, IN PARTICULAR, FOR OUR NEGOTIATING EFFORTS AT GENEVA. OUR SUCCESS IN BRINGING THE SOVIET UNION BACK TO THE TABLE AND IN ACHIEVING ANY REAL MOVEMENT TOWARD OUR SHARED GOAL OF MAJOR OFFENSIVE NUCLEAR ARMS REDUCTIONS RESULTS IN GOOD MEASURE FROM FIRM DIPLOMATIC BACKING ON THE PART OF OUR FRIENDS AND ALLIES FOR OUR NEGOTIATING POSITION. YOUR OWN SUPPORT AND UNDERSTANDING WILL CONTINUE TO BE CRITICALLY IMPORTANT AS WE SEEK MEANINGFUL PROGRESS IN THE GENEVA TALKS DURING THE MONTHS TO COME.

- MY PERSONAL HOPE IS FOR SUCCESS IN THESE NEGOTIATIONS, THUS CREATING A MORE STABLE STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT. THIS WILL REQUIRE MORE THAN JUST THE REDUCTION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS, AND EFFORTS TOWARD THEIR ULTIMATE ELIMINATION. IT MUST ALSO ADDRESS THE CONDITIONS THAT HAVE MADE THESE WEAPONS NECESSARY. TO ACHIEVE THAT GOAL, I STRONGLY BELIEVE THAT, IN ADDITION TO OUR EFFORTS IN GENEVA, WE WILL NEED SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS TOWARD CORRECTING CONVENTIONAL AND OTHER FORCE IMBALANCES, ENSURING FULL COMPLIANCE WITH EXISTING AND FUTURE TREATY OBLIGATIONS, ACHIEVING PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF REGIONAL CONFLICTS IN WAYS THAT ALLOW FREE CHOICE WITHOUT OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE, AND OBTAINING A DEMONSTRATED COMMITMENT BY THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP TO PEACEFUL COMPETITION. UNTIL THEN, NUCLEAR DETERRENCE MUST REMAIN FULLY EFFECTIVE, AS LONG AS IT IS THE ONLY WORKABLE MEANS FOR PREVENTING WAR AND GUARANTEEING OUR SECURITY.

- WE OBVIOUSLY AGREE THAT MANY OF THE SPECIFIC ELEMENTS OF MR. GORBACHEV'S PROPOSAL ARE DELIBERATELY DESIGNED TO PRESERVE AND STRENGTHEN SOVIET MILITARY ADVANTAGES AND ARE INIMICAL TO OUR COMMON SECURITY INTERESTS. AT THE SAME TIME, THERE ALSO APPEARS TO BE GENERAL AGREEMENT THAT WE SHOULD USE THIS CURRENT OPPORTUNITY TO ADVANCE OUR OWN ARMS CONTROL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES AND TO EXPLORE WITH THE SOVIETS THOSE AREAS WHERE THERE IS A POSSIBILITY FOR PROGRESS ON MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE TERMS.

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- ACCORDINGLY, I WILL BE RESPONDING TO MR. GORBACHEV BY NOTING THAT I AM PLEASSED THAT HE IS PREPARED TO WORK WITH ME TOWARD AN ULTIMATE GOAL OF ELIMINATING NUCLEAR WEAPONS. IN DOING SO, HOWEVER, I WILL EMPHASIZE THE MANY STEPS THAT MUST BE TAKEN IN OTHER AREAS AFFECTING OUR SECURITY BEFORE THE ACTUAL ATTAINMENT OF A NUCLEAR-FREE WORLD COULD BECOME POSSIBLE, OR EVEN DESIRABLE. I WILL STRESS THE NEED FOR CONCURRENT PROGRESS IN IMPROVING THE STABILITY OF THE OVERALL EAST-WEST SECURITY BALANCE, WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON STEPS TO REDRESS EXISTING CONVENTIONAL IMBALANCES, A VERIFIABLE, GLOBAL BAN ON CHEMICAL WEAPONS, NEW CONFIDENCE-BUILDING MEASURES, AND A STRONGER NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION REGIME.

- I WILL ALSO MAKE CLEAR THAT THE FIRST STEPS OF NUCLEAR ARMS REDUCTIONS MUST BE TAKEN BILATERALLY BY THE U.S. AND THE SOVIET UNION. CONSISTENT WITH THE JOINT STATEMENT WHICH MR. GORBACHEV AND I AGREED ON IN GENEVA, OUR IMMEDIATE FOCUS MUST REMAIN ON THE PROMPT ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THESE FIRST STEPS, ESPECIALLY THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PRINCIPLE OF 50 PERCENT REDUCTIONS, APPROPRIATELY APPLIED, AND AN INTERIM INF AGREEMENT.

- I WILL TELL MR. GORBACHEV THAT ONLY WHEN OUR FIRST BILATERAL STEPS HAVE BEEN COMPLETED COULD WE ENVISAGE SUBSEQUENT MULTILATERAL STEPS. AT THIS TIME I SEE NO REASON TO ADDRESS SPECIFIC STEPS BEYOND THOSE INITIAL REDUCTIONS WHICH ARE APPROPRIATE ONLY FOR BILATERAL U.S.-SOVIET NEGOTIATION. RATHER, OUR PRIORITY SHOULD BE TO ENABLE OUR RESPECTIVE NEGOTIATORS IN GENEVA AND OTHER RELEVANT FORA TO ACHIEVE EARLY PROGRESS ON THE IMMEDIATE ISSUES AT HAND. THE U.S. CAN MAKE NO COMMITMENTS FOR OTHER NUCLEAR POWERS, NOR CAN WE AGREE TO ANY BILATERAL U.S./SOVIET ARRANGEMENT WHICH WOULD SUGGEST OTHERWISE. I WILL REMIND MR. GORBACHEV THAT THE OTHER NUCLEAR POWERS HAVE MADE KNOWN THEIR OWN VIEWS ON THIS POINT AND ON THE PROGRESS NECESSARY IN U.S./SOVIET NUCLEAR REDUCTIONS AND IN OTHER ARMS CONTROL AREAS WHICH WOULD ESTABLISH THE CONDITIONS FOR THEM TO CONSIDER WHETHER AND HOW THEIR SECURITY INTERESTS MIGHT BE SERVED BY PARTICIPATION IN FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS.

- I BELIEVE WE HAVE ALL BEEN DISAPPOINTED THAT THE SOVIET UNION HAS CHOSEN NOT TO DEMONSTRATE ANY CONSTRUCTIVE MOVEMENT IN EITHER START OR DEFENSE AND SPACE MATTERS. INDEED, THE SOVIETS APPEAR RELUCTANT EVEN TO ADDRESS FULLY OUR OWN PROPOSALS IN THESE AREAS MADE ONLY LAST NOVEMBER. THE U.S. NEGOTIATORS PUT FORWARD THOSE PROPOSALS IN AN EFFORT TO MEET THE LEGITIMATE CONCERNS OF BOTH SIDES AND AS A POSSIBLE BASIS FOR NEGOTIATION OF A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE AGREEMENT WITHIN START. IN LIGHT OF THE LACK OF POSITIVE SOVIET MOVEMENT IN THIS AREA, I AM NOT INTRODUCING ANY CHANGES IN OUR START POSITION AT THIS TIME. IN THE DEFENSE AND SPACE AREA, OUR NEGOTIATORS WILL BE INSTRUCTED TO REAFFIRM THAT LIMITS ON RESEARCH INTO STRATEGIC DEFENSES, WHICH THE SOVIET UNION CONTINUES TO DEMAND, CANNOT BE VERIFIED AND WOULD NOT SERVE WESTERN SECURITY INTERESTS.

- I BELIEVE THE MOST APPROPRIATE AREA IN WHICH WE CAN AND SHOULD TEST THE SOVIETS IS IN INF. AS WE HAVE DISCUSSED IN OUR

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CONSULTATIONS, THE SOVIETS HAVE BROKEN SOME NEW GROUND WITH THEIR NEW INF POSITION. AT THE SAME TIME, HOWEVER, THEY HAVE PUT FORWARD UNACCEPTABLE CONDITIONS -- BOTH NEW AND FAMILIAR -- FOR AN INF AGREEMENT. THESE INCLUDE THEIR CONTINUED REFUSAL TO ADDRESS THE NEED FOR REDUCTIONS IN SS-20'S DEPLOYED IN ASIA, THEIR FAILURE TO ADDRESS THE PROBLEM OF CONSTRAINING SRINF MISSILES, AND THEIR INSISTENCE ON LIMITATIONS ON THIRD COUNTRY SYSTEMS AS A PREREQUISITE FOR THE ELIMINATION OF U.S. AND SOVIET LRINF MISSILES IN EUROPE.

- IN DECIDING OUR NEXT STEPS, I AM ACUTELY SENSITIVE TO YOUR SPECIAL CONCERNS. ON THE BASIS OF OUR EXTENSIVE DISCUSSIONS WITH ALLIES AND FRIENDS IN BOTH EUROPE AND ASIA, I BELIEVE THAT IT IS CRITICALLY IMPORTANT THAT OUR RESPONSE TO THE SOVIETS ON INF NOT ONLY TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THEIR STATED WILLINGNESS TO ELIMINATE THEIR LRINF MISSILES, AT LEAST IN EUROPE, BUT ALSO REAFFIRM CERTAIN BASIC AND LONG-STANDING PRINCIPLES OF OUR OWN, PARTICULARLY:

-- OUR INSISTENCE ON EQUALITY OF GLOBAL RIGHTS AND ON REDUCTIONS AND LIMITATIONS ON LRINF MISSILES ON A GLOBAL BASIS;

-- THE UNACCEPTABILITY OF LINKING BILATERAL U.S.-SOVIET REDUCTIONS TO THIRD COUNTRY FORCES;

-- THE NEED FOR APPROPRIATE ACCOMPANYING CONSTRAINTS ON SRINF MISSILES; AND

-- THE CRITICAL IMPORTANCE OF MEASURES FOR EFFECTIVE VERIFICATION.

- THEREFORE, WITH REGARD TO INF, I AM INFORMING MR. GORBACHEV THAT IN RESPONSE TO THE SOVIET OFFER OF A NEAR-TERM, ZERO-ZERO OUTCOME IN EUROPE, AN OFFER THEY FORMULATED IN THE CONTEXT OF UNACCEPTABLE LIMITS ON BRITISH AND FRENCH NUCLEAR DETERRENTS AND WITHOUT ANY REFERENCE TO THEIR SIZEABLE FORCES IN ASIA, WE WILL OFFER A PROPOSAL THAT WOULD PERMIT A ZERO-ZERO OUTCOME BOTH IN EUROPE AND IN ASIA BY THE END OF 1989. THEREFORE, I WILL PROPOSE THE FOLLOWING CONCRETE PLAN TO ACHIEVE THIS AIM.

-- BY THE END OF 1987, THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION WOULD LIMIT THEIR LAND-BASED LRINF MISSILE DEPLOYMENTS IN EUROPE TO 140 LAUNCHERS EACH, WITH THE SOVIET UNION MAKING CONCURRENT PROPORTIONATE REDUCTIONS IN ASIA.

-- WITHIN THE FOLLOWING YEAR, BOTH SIDES WOULD FURTHER REDUCE THE NUMBERS OF LRINF MISSILE LAUNCHERS REMAINING IN EUROPE AND ASIA BY AN ADDITIONAL 50 PERCENT. FINALLY, BOTH SIDES WOULD MOVE TO THE TOTAL ELIMINATION OF THIS CATEGORY OF WEAPONS BY THE END OF 1989.

-- ASSOCIATED WITH THIS PLAN, THERE WOULD BE A PARALLEL SERIES OF GLOBAL LRINF MISSILE WARHEAD CEILINGS UNDER WHICH THE U.S. RETAINS THE RIGHT TO GLOBAL EQUALITY. AS SOVIET SS-20

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LAUNCHERS ARE REDUCED, THE LAUNCHERS AND THEIR ASSOCIATED MISSILES AND WARHEADS WOULD BE DESTROYED. U.S. SYSTEMS IN EXCESS OF THE LAUNCHER LIMITS CITED ABOVE COULD BE WITHDRAWN TO THE U.S. UNLESS, OR UNTIL, THEY WERE ALSO IN EXCESS OF THE EQUAL GLOBAL WARHEAD CEILING ASSOCIATED WITH THE LAUNCHER REDUCTIONS THEN BEING IMPLEMENTED, IN WHICH CASE THEY WOULD BE DESTROYED (WHILE PROTECTING A RIGHT TO CONVERT PERSHING II MISSILES TO PERSHING I MISSILES.)

-- ALSO, UNDER THIS PLAN, UNLESS OTHERWISE AGREED, SOVIET REDUCTIONS IN BOTH EUROPE AND ASIA WOULD BE CONCURRENT AND PROPORTIONAL.

-- THESE REDUCTIONS AND LIMITS WOULD INVOLVE U.S. AND SOVIET SYSTEMS ONLY. THERE WOULD BE NO AGREED CONSTRAINTS ON THE FORCES OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OR FRANCE.

-- THESE REDUCTIONS WOULD ALSO BE ASSOCIATED WITH AN EQUAL SHORTER-RANGE INF (SRINF) CEILING AT CURRENT SOVIET LEVELS OR TO FREEZE SRINF AT BOTH SIDES JANUARY 1, 1982, LEVELS. THIS CEILING WOULD BE FULLY IMPLEMENTED BY THE END OF 1987.

-- FINALLY, THE UNITED STATES WILL PROPOSE SPECIFIC VERIFICATION PROCEDURES TAILORED TO THE SPECIFIC WEAPONRY LIMITS WE SEEK. THESE DETAILS WILL BE PRESENTED IN THE CONTEXT OF A COMPREHENSIVE VERIFICATION REGIME WHICH INCLUDES THE USE OF NATIONAL TECHNICAL MEANS OF VERIFICATION AND COOPERATIVE MEASURES BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS SUCH AS ON-SITE MONITORING/INSPECTION AND DATA EXCHANGES.

(FOR NATO ADDRESSEES:

- I AM, OF COURSE, COGNIZANT OF THE COURAGEOUS EFFORTS MADE BY ALLIANCE MEMBERS TO ACHIEVE THE SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE "DUAL-TRACK DECISION" IN BOTH ITS ASPECTS. NEEDLESS TO SAY, WE STAND BY THAT DECISION AND DO NOT WISH TO UNDO THE SECURITY BENEFITS WHICH IT REPRESENTS.

- IN CONJUNCTION WITH STRINGENT VERIFICATION MEASURES, WE BELIEVE THAT THE NUMERICAL AND GEOGRAPHIC CONSTRAINTS ON SOVIET SS-20s IN OUR PROPOSAL WOULD PRACTICALLY NEGATE THE LRINF MISSILE THREAT TO THE ALLIANCE, AND MOVE SUBSTANTIALLY TOWARD ULTIMATE ELIMINATION OF THE ENTIRE CATEGORY OF SYSTEMS WHICH HAS SO AGGRAVATED THE SECURITY PROBLEMS OF OUR EUROPEAN AND ASIAN FRIENDS AND ALLIES. BY INSISTING THAT SOVIET REDUCTIONS TO 140 LRINF MISSILE LAUNCHERS IN EUROPE WOULD HAVE TO OCCUR BEFORE THE U.S. WOULD BEGIN REDUCTIONS BELOW THAT LEVEL, WE SEEK TO AVOID NEAR-TERM POLITICAL PROBLEMS, AND TO ENSURE THAT AT NO POINT DURING THE REDUCTION PROCESS WOULD THE SOVIETS BE ABLE TO ACHIEVE A LASTING ADVANTAGE. END NATO ADDRESSEES.)

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- I WELCOME MR. GORBACHEV'S IMPLICIT RECOGNITION OF OUR LONG-HELD POSITION THAT VERIFICATION OF NEGOTIATED AGREEMENTS IS CRITICAL AND THAT IT IS VITAL THAT ANY NEW ARMS CONTROL ACCORDS INCORPORATE STRINGENT VERIFICATION MEASURES, INCLUDING MEASURES MORE COMPREHENSIVE AND EXACTING THAN IN ANY PREVIOUS AGREEMENT. OUR NEGOTIATORS IN GENEVA AND ELSEWHERE WILL BE INSTRUCTED TO PURSUE AND EXPLORE THE IMPLICATIONS OF MR. GORBACHEV'S PUBLIC STATEMENT DEALING WITH ON-SITE INSPECTION AND OTHER COOPERATIVE MEASURES THAT MIGHT BE NECESSARY.

- I WILL ALSO UNDERScore TO MR. GORBACHEV THE IMPORTANCE THAT THE U.S. AND ITS ALLIES CONTINUE TO ATTACH TO EARLY PROGRESS WITHIN THE ONGOING MULTILATERAL MBFR AND CDE TALKS, AS WELL AS CW NEGOTIATIONS AT THE CD. TAKING NOTE OF HIS POSITIVE PUBLIC REFERENCES IN THIS REGARD, I WOULD MAKE CLEAR THAT SOVIET NEGOTIATORS IN THESE FORA HAVE YET TO MEET BASIC WESTERN CONCERNS. IN SEEKING AN AGREEMENT IN STOCKHOLM, WE WILL LOOK TO THE SOVIETS TO ADHERE TO THE MADRID MANDATE AND TO RESPOND POSITIVELY TO OUR VERIFICATION REQUIREMENTS. IN MBFR, WE ARE STILL HOPEFUL THAT THE SOVIETS WILL RESPOND CONSTRUCTIVELY TO NATO'S DECEMBER 1985 PROPOSAL, PARTICULARLY AS IT RELATES TO VERIFICATION. IN THAT REGARD, WE ARE DISAPPOINTED THAT THEIR FEBRUARY 29th PRESENTATION DOES NOT CONSTRUCTIVELY ADDRESS OUR CONCERNS. ON CW, WE REMAIN COMMITTED TO PROGRESS TOWARDS AGREEMENT ON A GLOBAL BAN AND HAVE INTENSIFIED OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH THE SOVIETS TO THAT END.

- I HOPE YOU WILL AGREE THAT THE APPROACH I HAVE SET OUT ABOVE, INCLUDING OUR NEW INF INITIATIVE, IS RESPONSIVE TO BOTH THE SUGGESTIONS AND THE CONCERNS WHICH HAVE BEEN EXPRESSED TO US OVER RECENT DAYS BY OUR FRIENDS AND ALLIES. WE FRANKLY BELIEVE THAT A RESPONSE BUILT AROUND THESE BASIC ELEMENTS WILL FULLY PROTECT OUR SHARED INTERESTS WHILE PERMITTING US TO EXPLORE WHETHER THE SOVIET PROPOSALS PRESENT ANY OPPORTUNITIES FOR REAL PROGRESS. THE EXTENSIVE CONSULTATIONS WHICH WE HAVE JUST CONDUCTED HAVE ONLY SERVED TO STRENGTHEN MY CONVICTION THAT WE ARE ON THE RIGHT PATH. ONCE AGAIN, I WANT TO EXPRESS MY DEEP APPRECIATION FOR YOUR COLLABORATION AND SUPPORT IN THIS ENDEAVOR.

SINCERELY, RONALD REAGAN

FOR POSTS:

- UPON DELIVERY YOU SHOULD STRESS THAT THE PRESIDENTIAL LETTER TO GENERAL SECRETARY GORBACHEV HAS NOT BEEN DELIVERED. THIS NOTIFICATION IS IN THE SPIRIT OF OUR OTHER CONSULTATIONS ABOUT GENEVA, AND RECIPIENTS SHOULD HANDLE WITH EXTREME SENSITIVITY. (FYI: THIS DOES NOT, REPEAT NOT, CONSTITUTE AUTHORITY TO ANSWER PRESS QUERIES. PUBLIC HANDLING THEMES AND STATEMENTS ON THIS PROPOSAL WILL BE TRANSMITTED SEPTEL. END FYI.)

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SUBJECT: GUIDANCE FOR NST DEL ON SOVIET PROPOSAL

REF: STATE 12556 (NST INSTRUCTIONS FOR ROUND IV)

1. (S) ENTIRE TEXT.

2. WASHINGTON HAS COMPLETED ITS ASSESSMENT OF NEW SOVIET PROPOSAL. GUIDANCE ADDITIONAL TO REFTEL IS PROVIDED BELOW. SPECIFIC GUIDANCE FOR EACH OF THE THREE NEGOTIATING GROUPS IS BEING PROVIDED SEPTEL.

3. POTENTIAL COMMON GROUND. CERTAIN ELEMENTS OF THE SOVIET "PLAN" REFLECT POSITIONS OFFERED BY THE US TO THE SOVIETS OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS. FOR EXAMPLE, THE US IS ON RECORD AS CALLING ULTIMATELY FOR THE TOTAL ELIMINATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS. FURTHER, IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS ABOUT HOW THE US WOULD PROPOSE HANDLING THE ISSUE OF BRITISH AND FRENCH FORCES, WE SUGGESTED TO THE SOVIETS THAT WE SHOULD FIRST BILATERALLY MOVE TO 50 PERCENT REDUCTIONS (AS WE DEFINE THEM), AND THEN WE COULD ENVISION INVOLVING NOT ONLY THE BRITISH AND FRENCH BUT THE PRC AS WELL. WE HAVE ALSO REPEATEDLY STRESSED THE NEED TO GO BEYOND NTM, AS REQUIRED, FOR EFFECTIVE VERIFICATION.

4. SPECIFIC PROBLEMS. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE WAY THAT THE SOVIET PROPOSAL IS FRAMED TOGETHER WITH MANY OF ITS ELEMENTS POSE CERTAIN SERIOUS OBSTACLES TO PROGRESS AND RAISE SERIOUS QUESTIONS ABOUT WHETHER THE SOVIETS ARE PREPARED TO MOVE FORWARD ON AREAS OF COMMON GROUND PER THE NOVEMBER JOINT STATEMENT.

FIRST AND FOREMOST, TO THE EXTENT THE SOVIET PROPOSAL LINKS THE ENTIRE PLAN TO A BAN ON "SPACE-STRIKE" ARMS, INCLUDING THE TERMINATION OF THE U.S. SDI PROGRAM, THE UNITED STATES CANNOT ACCEPT SUCH AN APPROACH.

THE SOVIET "PLAN" ALSO NARROWS THE FOCUS OF NEGOTIATIONS TO THE TOTAL ELIMINATION OF ALL NUCLEAR WEAPONS BY 1999, MAKING THAT A GOAL IN ITSELF. THEIR PROPOSAL DOES NOT ADDRESS THE CORRESPONDING REASONS FOR THE WEAPONS AND THE ASSOCIATED CONDITIONS THAT WILL BE NEEDED TO ELIMINATE THE UNDERLYING SECURITY REQUIREMENTS OR REPLACE THE CONTRIBUTION NOW MADE BY THE NUCLEAR WEAPONS. AS A RESULT, IT OFFERS NO SCHEDULE FOR THE RESOLUTION OF EXISTING REGIONAL CONFLICTS AND DIFFERENCES. IT CALLS FOR SCHEDULING THE TOTAL ELIMINATION OF TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS, FOR EXAMPLE, BUT DOES NOT CALL FOR A CORRESPONDING SCHEDULE FOR THE SIGNIFICANT REDUCTION OF CONVENTIONAL FORCE IMBALANCES IN CENTRAL EUROPE. NOR DOES THE PROPOSAL ADDRESS THE VITAL IMPORTANCE OF COMPLIANCE. THIS ONE-SIDED FOCUS PUTS

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MAXIMUM PRESSURE ON THE WEST AND AVOIDS PUTTING CORRESPONDING PRESSURE ON THE EAST. IN SHORT, AS THE SOVIETS HAVE OFTEN TRIED TO DO, THIS ATTEMPTS TO SET AN UNFAIR PUBLIC FOCUS AND AGENDA.

THE SOVIET "PLAN" ALSO CALLS FOR US TO ACCEPT MANY UNACCEPTABLE ELEMENTS OF THE SOVIET APPROACH TO REDUCTIONS DURING THE FIRST PHASE, FRONT-LOADING THE DEAL, IN ORDER TO GET CERTAIN BENEFITS IN SUBSEQUENT PHASES. MANY OF THE "BENEFITS" (E.G., THE TOTAL ELIMINATION OF TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS) PROMISED IN SUBSEQUENT SOVIET PHASES PLAY MORE TO PUBLIC OPINION THAN TO REAL BENEFITS FOR THE US AND ITS ALLIES.

THE DIRECT IMPACT OF SOME OF THE SOVIET PROVISIONS WOULD BE TO DERAIL WESTERN MODERNIZATION. MOREOVER, SOME OF THESE PROVISIONS, BY SIMPLY BEING GIVEN THE STATUS OF REAL "POSSIBILITIES", COULD ACHIEVE THE SAME RESULT. IT IS NOT IN US INTEREST TO LET THE SOVIETS GAIN LEVERAGE BY MAKING THEIR OUTYEAR DETAILS APPEAR TO BE LIKELY POSSIBILITIES.

5. IN VIEW OF ABOVE, US DEL, IN CARRYING OUT AGENDA OF REFTTEL, SHOULD:

(A) MAINTAIN FOCUS AND PRIORITY ON EXECUTING THE MANDATE AGREED AT THE LAST SUMMIT TO PURSUE AREAS OF COMMON GROUND--50 PERCENT REDUCTION IN STRATEGIC NUCLEAR ARMS, APPROPRIATELY APPLIED AND AN INTERIM INF AGREEMENT;

(B) CONTINUE TO REJECT ELEMENTS OF THE NEW SOVIET PROPOSAL THAT HAVE PREVIOUSLY BEEN OFFERED BY THE SOVIET SIDE AND REJECTED BY THE US;

(C) WITH THE SPECIFIC EXCEPTIONS NOTED IN THE INF AREA, REJECT ANY IDEA OF NEGOTIATIONS ON FUTURE STEPS OR PHASES, NOTING THAT THIS WOULD BE PREMATURE AND WASTE TIME, AT BEST;

(D) MAKE CLEAR THAT IN US VIEW THE TOTAL ELIMINATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS REQUIRES CONDITIONS THAT INCLUDE CORRECTING CONVENTIONAL AND OTHER FORCE IMBALANCES AND PROBLEMS, EFFECTIVE VERIFICATION FOR FUTURE AGREEMENTS, AND FULL COMPLIANCE WITH THEIR TREATY OBLIGATIONS (FYI. AT POLITICAL LEVEL WE WILL BE RAISING OTHER IMPORTANT CRITERIA SUCH AS PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF REGIONAL CONFLICTS IN WAYS THAT ALLOW FREE CHOICE WITHOUT OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE AND A FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE IN THE ORIENTATION AND AMBITIONS OF THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP. END FYI);

(E) ALSO MAKE CLEAR US VIEW THAT ELIMINATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS DOES NOT OBVIATE THE NEED FOR NON-NUCLEAR DEFENSES, PARTICULARLY TO PROTECT AGAINST CHEATING OR BREAKOUT BY ANY COUNTRY: AND,

(F) PROBE THE SOVIET OFFER ON VERIFICATION IN A MANNER WHICH DOES NOT PREJUDICE US OPTIONS FOR, OR SOVIET RESPONSIVENESS TO, SPECIFIC MEASURES WHICH THE US WILL BE PRESENTING.

6. IN CARRYING OUT ABOVE, US DEL SHOULD DRAW ON FOLLOWING POINTS:

(A) AGREE WITH THE GENERAL GOAL OF MOVING TO THE TOTAL ELIMINATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS WHEN POSSIBLE, CONSISTENT WITH OUR OVERALL REQUIREMENTS FOR SECURITY AND STABILITY.

(B) NOTE THAT THE US HAS PROPOSED AND CONTINUES TO ADVOCATE A PROCESS BY WHICH THE US AND THE USSR WOULD TAKE THE FIRST STEPS BY IMPLEMENTING THE PRINCIPLE OF A 50 PERCENT REDUCTION IN THE NUCLEAR FORCES OF BOTH SIDES APPROPRIATELY APPLIED AND BY PROMPTLY NEGOTIATING AN INTERIM INF AGREEMENT. WHEN US AND SOVIET FORCES ARE REDUCED, AND ADDITIONAL REDUCTIONS ARE UNDER DISCUSSION, WE CAN ENVISION SUBSEQUENT STEPS WHICH COULD INVOLVE THE UK, FRANCE AND THE PRC SO THAT ALL CAN MOVE TO ZERO NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN A BALANCED AND STABLE MANNER. (FYI. THIS APPROACH WAS SPECIFICALLY PROPOSED TO THE USSR BY THE US DURING THE PREPARATIONS FOR AND DURING THE RECENT SUMMIT. END FYI.)

(C) OUR IMMEDIATE FOCUS SHOULD REMAIN ON PROMPT ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE FIRST STEPS OF THIS PROCESS, ESPECIALLY THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PRINCIPLE OF 50 PERCENT REDUCTIONS APPROPRIATELY APPLIED AND AN INTERIM INF AGREEMENT.

(D) TO APPROPRIATELY APPLY THE PRINCIPLE OF 50 PERCENT REDUCTION AND TO ACHIEVE A SEPARATE INF AGREEMENT, WILL REQUIRE SERIOUS NEGOTIATION. THERE ARE SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES ON THE ELEMENTS OF AN EQUITABLE OUTCOME. THE RESOLUTION OF THESE DIFFERENCES AND THE FINDING OF COMMON GROUND IS THE AREA IN WHICH BOTH SIDES MUST NOW FOCUS THEIR NEGOTIATING EFFORTS IF THE GOAL FOR THIS STEP IS TO BE ACHIEVED. IT IS AN AREA IN WHICH REAL NEGOTIATIONS CAN TAKE PLACE AT THIS TIME. WE SHOULD BOTH AGREE THAT THIS SHOULD BE OUR FOCUS. THIS IS IN KEEPING WITH THE COMMITMENT TO ACCELERATE EFFORTS TO FIND COMMON GROUND MADE AT THE MOST RECENT SUMMIT. IT IS ALSO CLEARLY THE FOUNDATION UPON WHICH BOTH WE AND THE SOVIETS AGREE ALL ELSE MUST BUILD.

(E) THE SOVIET PROPOSAL ON WHAT SPECIFICALLY WOULD BE ACCOMPLISHED IN ITS SUBSEQUENT PHASES CONTAINS MUCH WITH WHICH WE CANNOT AGREE AT THIS TIME. FOCUS ON SUBSEQUENT PHASES WOULD SIMPLY DIVERT TIME AND TALENT FROM THE IMMEDIATE WORK AT HAND ON THE IMMEDIATE STEPS (UPON WHICH BOTH SIDES AGREED AT THE SUMMIT).

(F) THE U.S. IS PLEASED THAT THE SOVIET UNION RECOGNIZES OUR LONG-HELD POSITION THAT VERIFICATION OF NEGOTIATED AGREEMENTS IS A CRITICAL ELEMENT. IN PURSUIT OF GENERAL SECRETARY GORBACHEV'S OFFER TO COME TO TERMS ON ANY NECESSARY VERIFICATION MEASURES, WE WILL BE PROPOSING SPECIFIC VERIFICATION PROCEDURES TAILORED TO THE SPECIFIC WEAPONRY LIMITS WE SEEK. THESE DETAILS WILL BE PRESENTED IN THE CONTEXT OF A COMPREHENSIVE VERIFICATION REGIME WHICH INCLUDES THE USE OF NATIONAL TECHNICAL MEANS OF VERIFICATION AND COOPERATIVE MEASURES BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS SUCH AS ON-SITE MONITORING/INSPECTION AND DATA EXCHANGES.

IN THIS CONTEXT, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT POLITICAL TRUST IN VERIFICATION AND COMPLIANCE BE REBUILT THROUGH DEMONSTRATED CHANGES IN THOSE SOVIET TESTING PRACTICES THAT NOW IMPEDE VERIFICATION AND THROUGH THE CORRECTION OF OTHER FORMS OF SOVIET NONCOMPLIANCE WITH EXISTING AGREEMENTS. !!