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American Embassy - Bonn

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

Date: July 1, 1966

SUBJECT: Disarmament and Related Problems

PARTICIPANTS: Mr. Foster, Chairman, US Delegation, ENDC
Minister Hillenbrand, American Embassy, Bonn
State Secretary Carstens, Foreign Office
Ambassador Schnippenkoetter, Commissioner for
Disarmament, Foreign Office

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After an initial exchange of amenities, in response to State Secretary Carstens' query, Mr. Foster said that he was not optimistic that an agreement would be reached on non-proliferation during the present session of the 16-power group in Geneva. When we put forward questions to the Soviets as to their position, we received only further questions in response. At the session on the morning of July 1, all five Warsaw Pact representatives had bitterly attacked the United States. The Italians supported us, but the British were confused in view of the reports out of London as to Wilson's stand.

This change of the as had made it temporarily easier for Germany, Carstens remarked ruefully. Normally the Federal Republic was on the receiving end at Geneva. Mr. Foster at this point outlined the history of the 16-power committee. On balance, he concluded, the FRG was probably better off out than in, since the bid for membership would almost certainly result in pressure to admit the GDR as well. The U. S. representative always tried to respond vigorously to the almost daily attacks on the FRG. Carstens observed that the Federal Government was grateful for this defense, of which it was aware. He personally was likewise resigned to the fact that FRG membership was, all things considered, not feasible at the present time.

DCM:MHillenbrand:am

Cleared in Draft by Mr. Foster

SECRET

SECRET

2

The danger of continued impasse at Geneva, Mr. Foster noted, was that the 18-power committee might be disbanded. There were already mutterings to that effect. On the other hand, if the committee did not exist, it would be necessary to invent it. As an optimist by nature, he maintained the hope that success might eventually be achieved. The two best possibilities were: (a) some extension of the test ban above a threshold, and (b) non-proliferation. The difficulty with the first was that a precise line could not be drawn. The threshold would be different for granite, aluminum, silt, etc. A treaty involving such a line might accordingly be short-lived. As for non-proliferation, he (Foster) had on June 30 told the Soviet representative Roshchin that his Government had raised the ante. Last fall it had been stated that if a hardware arrangement among the Western countries were not involved, there would be no barrier to agreement. Now deployment of nuclear weapons and additional consultation had been added as barriers. Roshchin had responded that there had been no change in the Soviet position, which was drafted in granite, and that the hardware arrangement was the real barrier. The question is, Mr. Foster said he had continued: What do the Soviets really mean? There have been many conflicting statements recently by Gromyko, Kosygin, Tsarapkin and Roshchin.

Carstens commented that the critical point is obviously a hardware solution. As Mr. Foster was aware, the FRG had not abandoned its desire for such a solution -- if not in the form of the MLP then in some form. Mr. Foster noted that we have left the question open, and have made it clear that our draft was designed to leave it open. We had also left open the European force option. Actually the present Soviet arguments would cause us some trouble at Geneva, particularly the twist that, since the U. S. placed such strong emphasis on its retention of the veto, we must obviously have plans to transfer the weapons. Our draft, of course, left open the possibility of transfer to an organ or group of states provided there was no increase in the number of entities possessing nuclear weapons. Roshchin was cleverer in debate than Tsarapkin, Mr. Foster continued. He was more restrained in his speeches than his predecessor, who was somewhat of a ham actor. However, Roshchin was also considerably more cautious and tended to consult on everything with Moscow, even matters of procedure.

After indicating that there was no objection to Mr. Foster's seeing Tsarapkin while he was in Bonn, Carstens said he had been glad to receive the new Soviet Ambassador on his first call. He had attempted to discuss the recent German peace note, but Tsarapkin had merely commented that the FRG would have to accept the realities. The German initiative, Carstens went on, had been primarily addressed to Eastern Europe, though copies had been given to many other Governments. Answers had been received from all of the Warsaw Pact countries, with the exception of Rumania, which had indicated formally that it thought it better not to answer at all than to give a purely negative response.

Returning to the nuclear sharing problem, Carstens repeated that the FRG had not abandoned its desire for a hardware solution. He recalled that, when the Chancellor had visited Washington last December, he had left a memorandum on the subject with the President. The President

SECRET

SECRET

3

had described the paper as helpful, and it had been agreed that a copy would be sent to the British. Since then there had been no progress, and the subject had not really been discussed with Wilson during Erhard's recent visit to the U. K.

After Carstens had expressed interest in again visiting Geneva, Mr. Foster indicated that this would be desirable if real progress were being made. It seemed likely that the Committee would recess around August 25.

Ambassador Schnippenkoetter noted that the Soviets were saying that they had not really received any critique of their own non-proliferation treaty draft. Mr. Foster observed that we had asked many questions about it of the Soviets indicating our thinking. Usually we got only further questions in reply.

In response to Ambassador Schnippenkoetter's question as to the possibility of the non-aligned members' of the committee taking an initiative on disarmament, Mr. Foster conceded this might happen. They had established two subcommittees of four members each -- one on non-proliferation and one on the test ban -- the former of which might produce a new draft, or more probably suggestions on the two existing drafts.

Roschchin had indicated to him, Mr. Foster noted, that the Soviets would be willing to consider the American draft if certain changes were made. He had told Ros'chin that we had certain changes in mind. However, this was not the time to put them forward, Foster observed. We might wish to tighten up the safeguards provisions in compliance with the Pastore Resolution which had been passed 99 to 0. One thing was sure - there could be no agreement on the basis of the Soviet draft. Mr. Foster said he had made the point to the Soviets that if they continued obdurate and the non-proliferation agreement were not achieved, then other countries would go nuclear with the result that the FRG, about which the Soviets seemed most concerned, could eventually be under stronger compulsion to acquire such weapons itself.

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