

Notes from Washington Meeting

We met on December 5 with Scoville of ACDA, Gartoff and Sonnenfeld of State, Halperin of INS, along with a number of others, to discuss the coming Moscow visit. As a preliminary, there was some discussion of who is present now at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow. It was noted that Akelowsky, a fine interpreter, is there. Chris Squires is the science man.

In the view of almost all of the Russian studies group, the most useful outcome of our talks would be to get the Soviet to come to official conversations. We have put on the table a suggestion for a meeting and it is still their move to set a date or to accept or reject. So far there has been no official or even unofficial reaction to our ABM deployment as implying that the meeting is more difficult. Nor has there been any official statement that a proposal from the U.S. is needed for discussion purposes.

Among the items that will be of interest to us will be the Tallin defense system, which we must assume is ABM, although it may also not be. Their views here would be interesting. A second new system of interest are the mobile ICBMs. These were paraded and discussed during the celebration. Finally, there is the BOBS system. The mobile-launched ICMB, incidentally, has been quoted in the literature as being "intercontinental, self-propelled, hard-fueled".

The rapid Soviet deployment continues and there has so far been no discussion of what their program is for and what their objectives are. This will be interesting to try to understand. (So far, incidentally, there has been no indication of multiple warhead systems under development by the USSR.) A good speech on the characteristics of the Soviet build-up was given by Senator Jackson about a week ago.

A point of interest is the destabilizing moves being taken on each side. From our standpoint, the mobilized ICBM is destabilizing. They may well see our MIRV program as destabilizing. From either side, some more communication as directions and intent will surely be useful. As something to say from our

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side, we can properly say, if the subject comes up, that MIRV is a response to uncertainty about the Moscow ABM and Tallin system, i.e., it is effectively a penetration aid.

With respect to ABM, the Moscow ABM does not seem to be against China but against the U.S. systems. It will be interesting to see what they have in mind against China. Incidentally, in private the individual Soviets have commented that they think our ABM system may well be anti-USSR rather than, as stated, against China.

We should examine what can be done without a formal inspection agreement, i.e., following Warneke's speech, we can look for what can be done using unilateral systems.

As a different point, we can reasonably argue that Soviet and the U.S. have now reached rough parity. This is true if one includes their IRBM and MRBM in the total package. It is also noteworthy that there are a variety of possible measures and it may well be that they find more interest in a given measure, e.g., total megatonnage, whereas we might find more interest in a measure such as total numbers.

It will be interesting to press them as what they think FOBS are for. We can say that from our standpoint, they look like a first-strike systems, perhaps directed against airfields. Parenthetically, over-the-horizon radar may well minimize the significance of these.

It is likely that non-proliferation will soon be under discussion and we will be talking about two different problems. One is how to push ahead quickly to get US-USSR agreement and a full treaty tabled. The other one will be to assume agreement between us and then ask, how can we sign on the Nth countries. A point to be made is that more official US-USSR meetings to assess strategy parallel approaches to Nth countries will be very desirable.

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Following this meeting, we went up to discuss things with Undersecretary Foy Kohler. Kohler reiterated the need to press for formal US-USSR talks. He noted that no formal linkage with the Embassy would be preferable, i.e., we should look elsewhere for an interpreter if we need one.

Turning to broad problems, he noted that the USSR defense budget, both overt and hidden, has been going up significantly and remains at least at the level of 10 percent of GNP. It seems clear that a closing of their "missile gap" has been a high priority item. He noted that Kosygin, who is conscious of costs, may well see the difficulties in these, but he's not at all sure that the military and specifically Breshnev, do. It does seem clear that some internal talks between the civilians and military groups have been going on at a very high level, and doubtless this, along with the slowness of getting decentralization of economic activities will be subject for concern. He noted that things have been going slowly in agriculture also.

He suspects that the Middle East is probably still seen as a setback and noted that a closed Suez canal is hard on USSR trade. On the other hand, they have pushed military supplies back into the Middle East at an exceedingly rapid rate. Kohler also noted what to us is an almost appalling proclivity of the USSR to insert themselves into "hot crisis" situations, leaving their ships and supply vehicles vulnerable in case of some incident. He noted the increased numbers of advisers in Egypt, etc. Kohler thinks it will be interesting to see what we cover if we attempt to discuss this conventional arms supply problem.

He thinks it would be worthwhile seeing what we can find out from Kirillin on technological exchanges. He notes that the AEC-type exchange seems to be dead. With respect to normal exchanges, the pressure toward agreement seems to be going on but the US anticipates difficult negotiations.

Kohler discussed in general the kinds of nuclear restrictions leading toward cutbacks that we might reasonably think about and suggested as a tactical matter

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that we cease to employ the word "freeze", which has picked up a somewhat bad implication.

On a set of miscellaneous items where it would be of interest to hear reactions, he mentioned the question of their reaction to the Eastern initiatives of the FGR. He commented on the tendencies for France to link up to the USSR. He noted that the activities at the Korean border ought to be troublesome on both sides. He noted that the current view by the Soviet of the China situation would be interesting to know about. He also made the point that an expanded Common Market, including the UK, leading to stability in Europe ought, on a geo-political basis, to be interesting to the Soviet.

We discussed briefly whether we could perhaps act as messengers for the results of the VELA studies near the Kurile Islands and pointed out that a recommendation for this was in process. Kohler thought this was a poor idea and suggested that the first delivery of the data should be through official channels but agreed that they would try to get these delivered before we went over so that we would be able to talk about the delivery and use it as a lever for more similar exchanges.

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