Various factors probably contributed to Soviet decision to go ahead with NPT on Jan 18, but we inclined agree with Soviet move unrelated Vietnam developments. Also believe overriding consideration for Soviets was recognition that time running out for NPT and further delay playing into hands objectors. Opposition has been gathering strength in certain critical potential nuclear countries, while countries with less or no nuclear potential were tending increasingly to identify their interests with those which have such potential vis-a-vis existing nuclear weapons powers.
Soviets were obviously distressed in 22nd GA hearing number small Afro-Asian countries characterizing them in same breath with US as "two super powers" trying to order world by fiat. Both we and Soviets forced to vote for resolution on Non-Nuclear Weapon States Conf, scheduled for late August, resulting from our joint inability to provide GA with text last Fall. Neither we nor Soviets consider such conference desirable and Soviets obviously recognize risks involved if UNGA established timetable not met. Moreover, Soviets undoubtedly concluded that firm Western position on Article III would make profitless further attempts negotiate this issue.

Above analysis rests on basic assumption Soviets really want NPT and their overriding motivation in this respect has not been solely to drive wedge in NATO alliance, but to minimize on global basis prospects for hostilities involving nuclear weapons which could result in confrontation with US, by halting further spread of nuclear weapons into possible contentious areas. Although initially Soviets may have conceived of NPT as primarily instrument for putting extra layer of controls on FRG, believe last several
years Soviets have come to develop a broader view of value
of having an NPT. Chicom nuclear developments, ME war,
etc., surely had part in evolution Soviet thinking
from initial parochial concern re FRG.

It obvious that above speculation cannot lead to
assumption that Soviet agreement to NPT text largely on our
terms presages fundamental shift in Soviet policy toward FRG, EURATOM, or Western European integration movement.
Believe basic Soviet policy unchanged in this respect,
and Soviet reaction to detente overtures on part Western
Europeans will continue reflect this fact. However, we
would expect that NPT as another building block in
structure of postwar agreements with Soviets regarding
nuclear weapons cannot help but have positive effect on
differences between East and West.

GP-3

END