

UNCLASSIFIED

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~~TOP SECRET~~ 031634Z SENSITIVE [REDACTED] WHI 0791

AUGUST 3, 1971

EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY FOR AMBASSADOR GERARD SMITH  
FROM HENRY A. VISSINGER

I AM BECOMING SOMEWHAT CONCERNED BY WHAT APPEARS TO BE THE LEISURELY PACE AT WHICH THE CURRENT ROUND IS PROCEEDING. I HAD ANTICIPATED THAT AFTER THE MAY 20 ANNOUNCEMENT WE WOULD BE ABLE TO MOVE EXPEDITIOUSLY IN THE DIRECTION OF AN AGREEMENT WHICH WOULD BE CONSISTENT WITH THE UNDERSTANDINGS SET FORTH AT THAT TIME. I CAN SEE SEMONOV'S GAME BUT HE HAS PLAYED IT LONG ENOUGH NOW AND IT IS TIME TO GET DOWN TO BUSINESS.

IT NOW APPEARS THAT WE MAY BE PURSUING A PLETHORA OF ESOTERIC ISSUES AND RISKING A MORE RAPID PACE BY A SERIES OF DIVERSIONS ON MATTERS WHICH INVOLVE THE SPECIALIZED CONCERNS OF ARMS LIMITATIONS EXPERTS BUT WHICH IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS CONSTITUTE BARRIERS TO ACHIEVING THE KIND OF MOMENTUM WE HAD HOPED FOR.

WITH RESPECT TO THE ZERO ABM PROPOSAL, I MUST SAY THAT I HELD THE BELIEF, BASED ON MY CONVERSATIONS WITH DOBRYNIN, THAT SUCH A PROPOSAL WOULD NEVER BE SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED BY THE SOVIETS BECAUSE IT WOULD REQUIRE THE COSTLY DISMANTLING OF ASSETS WHICH THEY HAVE ALREADY PROVIDED FOR. BUT I WILL YIELD TO WISER HEADS.

I RECOGNIZE THAT MY CONCERNS MAY NOT BE WELL FOUNDED BUT WOULD VERY MUCH APPRECIATE REASSURANCE FROM YOU AND THE BENEFITS OF YOUR OWN ESTIMATE OF THE WORK SCHEDULE YOU VISUALIZE FOR THE DAYS AHEAD. THE FOREGOING IS NOT SUGGESTED BY WAY OF CRITICISM BUT RATHER AN EXPRESSION OF MY OWN PERSONAL CONCERN THAT WE MAY BE TRAVELING DOWN TOO MANY BYWAYS WHICH COULD DIVERT US FROM THE ULTIMATE GOAL WE ALL SEEK. THIS HAS NOT BEEN SHOWN TO THE PRESIDENT OR DISCUSSED WITH HIM.

WARM REGARDS.

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1894

DOWNGRADED  
Per E.O. 12958, Section 3.1 (g)  
by National Security Council.

U.S. ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT AGENCY:  
Declass/Release ( ) in whole ( ) in part  
by F. Smith Date DEC 15 1998

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