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December 8, 1971

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VIENNA 012

EYES ONLY MESSAGE FOR:

DR. HENRY A. KISSINGER,
The White House.

Dear Henry:

Perhaps a roundup of the Vienna situation may be useful. I think that we have now largely fulfilled NSDM-140. Soviets have moved considerably and appear to want to reach agreements.

On offensives they have cleared up a number of uncertainties. They accept our proposed form of agreement, will take commitment that modernization and replacement will not permit new deployments, and will agree not to substitute "heavy" for "light" ICBMs. I think we can get greater precision here. They hint that their proposed cutoff date is negotiable.

There is evidence that they have not started significant ICBM deployment [] since May 20th.

Their new Article I would declare against nationwide ABM defense. This would evidence acceptance theory of mutual deterrence. USSR (plus US) announcing to their

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U.S. ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT AGENCY
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people and world that they cannot defend populations against nuclear attack would have substantial political implications.

Soviets say that Moscow has accepted provisions negotiated ad referendum on early warning radars and SAM Upgrade.

They show flexibility on other drafting problems in ABM field with willingness to accommodate US on some matters, apparently wanting Joint Draft Text bracketing only Article III on levels and radars, pending final decision at top level. Today Semenov told me that within week they will table new ABM proposal taking into account NCA and ICBM defense without increasing ABM deployments. I guess this will be some form of "deferred options" they hinted at in Helsinki.

With the exception of minor clarification of right to post agreement switch from NCA to ICBM defense and vice versa, US has made no moves.

We can usefully spend next two weeks under general NSDM-140 guidance. It would be very useful to tell them before Christmas we will go for ABM treaty.

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But we will soon need fresh guidance to avoid giving impression that our purpose is to "stonewall" and not negotiate.

If there is to be any flexibility in our ABM level position, I think it important to disclose at least some of it during the period January 4th until the end of the current session (Soviet target January 20th). US movement should produce further Soviet move on radars. Key remaining issues (other than perhaps final ABM move) would be SL freeze inclusion and special withdrawal right in ABM treaty to link its life expectancy to negotiation of offensive limitation treaty.

So I trust NSC can address SALT issues before January 4th renewal in Vienna and that I can talk to President during my fortnight in US.

Warm regards.


GERRY SMITH

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