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TELEGRAM Department of State

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Origin

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STATE

Subject: Soviet Motivation on NPT

Ref: Bonn 7590, Moscow 2571

DISTO

Various factors probably contributed to Soviet decision to go ahead with NPT on Jan 18, but we inclined agree with ~~the~~ Soviet move unrelated Vietnam developments. ~~in Moscow that/it not prominent consideration~~ 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. ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~

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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 ~~September~~ ^{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 ~~mix~~ 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/~~over~~ ^{over} last several

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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 ~~xxxxxx~~ 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 ~~xxxxxx~~ 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.

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