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FM WASHINGTON

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TELNO 2607

OF 102301Z OCTOBER 86

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MY TELNO 2487: US/SOVIET RELATIONS: ARMS CONTROL ISSUES IN
CONGRESS

SUMMARY

1. PRE-SUMMIT AGREEMENT REACHED BETWEEN CONGRESS AND WHITE HOUSE ON THE HOUSE'S ARMS CONTROL AMENDMENTS TO THE DEFENCE BUDGET.

DETAIL

2. HOUSE AND SENATE NEGOTIATORS, WHO HAD BEEN DEADLOCKED FOR SEVERAL WEEKS OVER THE HOUSE'S ARMS CONTROL AMENDMENTS TO THE FY87 DEFENCE AUTHORISATION BILL (PARA 8 OF MY TUR), FINALLY REACHED AN AGREEMENT ON 10 OCTOBER WHICH THE PRESIDENT HAS INDICATED FROM REYKJAVIK THAT HE CAN ACCEPT.

3. THE OUTLINES OF THE AGREEMENT ARE AS FOLLOWS:

(A) SALT II LIMITS. NON-BINDING LANGUAGE WHICH WOULD URGE THE PRESIDENT TO OBSERVE THE LIMITS SO LONG AS THE SOVIET UNION DOES, BUT WOULD NOT REQUIRE HIM TO BE BOUND BY TREATIES WHICH THE SOVIET UNION IS VIOLATING:

(B) NUCLEAR TESTS. NO MORATORIUM, BUT THE PRESIDENT WILL SUBMIT THE TTBT AND PNET TO THE SENATE EARLY IN THE NEXT SESSION, AND, SUBJECT TO THE NEGOTIATION OF SATISFACTORY VERIFICATION PROVISIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION, WILL RECOMMEND THEIR RATIFICATION. IF NO SUCH VERIFICATION PACKAGE IS ACHIEVED, HE WILL WORK WITH THE SENATE TO DRAFT AN APPROPRIATE RESERVATION ON VERIFICATION:

(C) SDI FUNDING. AGREEMENT TO SPLIT THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE HOUSE AND SENATE FIGURES, AND COME OUT AT DOLLARS 3.5 BILLION FOR FY87:

(D) BINARY CW. NO BIG EYE PRODUCTION, BUT PRODUCTION OF 155MM HOWITZER SHELLS TO BE ALLOWED TO BEGIN:

(E) ASAT TESTING. EXTENSION OF CURRENT BAN FOR A FURTHER YEAR.

4. THE PRESIDENT HAS THUS, ON THE EVE OF THE PRE-SUMMIT, GOT ALL OR MOST OF WHAT HE WANTED FROM CONGRESS ON (A) AND (B), WHICH WERE THE TWO MAJOR STICKING POINTS FOR HIM. THE ARGUMENT THAT HIS HANDS SHOULD NOT BE TIED IN REYKJAVIK WAS, IN THE END, OVERWHELMING. HOUSE DEMOCRATS HAVE, HOWEVER, PREVAILED ON (E), AND HAVE WON SOME CONCESSIONS ON (D). THE OUTCOME ON (C) HAS LONG BEEN PREDICTED, AND CAUSES THE ADMINISTRATION NO REAL PAIN.

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5. THE FORMULA ON (A) LEAVES THE ADMINISTRATION FREE TO GO IN EITHER DIRECTION. SINCE THEY HAVE CONSISTENTLY MAINTAINED THAT THE RUSSIANS ARE IN VIOLATION OF CERTAIN SALT II PROVISIONS, THEY CAN CONTINUE ON THE COURSE CHARTED LAST MAY, BREACHING THE 1320 CEILING THIS WINTER. BUT IF THEY DECIDE NOT TO DO SO, CONGRESSIONAL PRESSURE COULD BE ADDUCED AS THE REASON. THE FORMULA ON (B) REQUIRES HIM TO DO A LITTLE MORE THAN HE SAID, IN HIS UNGA SPEECH, HE WOULD DO - I.E. HE WILL SUBMIT THE TREATIES TO THE HILL WITHOUT PRECONDITIONS, BUT WILL ONLY RECOMMEND THEIR RATIFICATION AFTER SOVIET AGREEMENT TO SATISFACTORY THRESHOLD VERIFICATION ARRANGEMENTS.

6. THIS AGREEMENT UNBLOCKS THE WAY TO A COMPROMISE ON THE OMNIBUS APPROPRIATIONS BILL FOR FY87, WHICH CONGRESS HAS TO PASS BEFORE IT CAN ADJOURN. THERE ARE STILL A NUMBER OF OTHER TRICKY ISSUES TO RESOLVE (E.G. THE LEVEL OF FOREIGN ASSISTANCE FUNDING). BUT IT NOW LOOKS AS IF THE BILL SHOULD BE READY FOR THE PRESIDENT'S SIGNATURE SHORTLY AFTER HIS RETURN FROM REYKJAVIK.

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ARMS CONTROL TALKS

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