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United States Department of State  
Washington, D.C. 20520

August 8, 1985

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Nitze-Kvitsinskiy Dinner Conversation,  
Helsinki, Finland, 31 July 1985

1. As Kvitsinskiy's guest, Ambassador Nitze had dinner with his former Soviet colleague at the Restaurant Tapiola Linnunrata, 31 July 1985. Norman Clyne from Nitze's staff and Pavel Palazhchenko on the Soviet side also attended. Below are the highlights of the substantive conversation during dinner.

2. Nitze noted that three possible types of outcomes for the summit meeting between Reagan and Gorbachev in November had been discussed that afternoon between Shultz and Shevardnadze. These were outcomes dealing (a) merely with the easy issues; (b) with somewhat more difficult issues; and (c) with the really substantive issues of security, particularly those involving the negotiations on nuclear and space arms in Geneva. Nitze said it was his understanding that the Ministers had agreed that the third category of issues should receive paramount attention by both sides prior to the summit. Kvitsinskiy agreed; he said it was the Soviet view that, while this third category contained the issues most difficult to resolve, it nevertheless contained those issues whose resolution could make the summit an unqualified success. Kvitsinskiy asked Nitze's opinion as to how we should prepare for the third category of issues.

3. Nitze said the first thing would be to clarify definitions and concepts. For example, the Soviet definition of what it calls "space strike arms" is based on an unacceptable criterion of intent; that is, according to Gromyko (and Kvitsinskiy) those systems stationed in space created or developed for the purpose of attacking objects in space or on land, and those stationed on earth for the purpose of attacking objects in space. Kvitsinskiy pointed out that the President had stated that the purpose of the U.S. SDI program was to develop such arms. Nitze emphasized that statements of intent were not pertinent, whether one was speaking of offensive or of defensive arms. Rather, systems must be dealt with on the basis of objective judgment of their capabilities derived from observable characteristics. If one looks at the Soviet definition on the basis of capabilities, the Galosh system

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around Moscow as well as all ICBM systems would be included in the ban. This is not desired by either side. Nitze emphasized the need for precise agreement on what is to be included in the agreements between us and what is to be excluded. We will find it necessary to stay away from generalities such as the Soviet demand for a ban on "space strike arms" based on an ambiguous and misleading definition.

4. Changing the subject, Kvitsinskiy asked if the U.S. would live up to the ABM Treaty. Nitze replied that the U.S. would do so and had made that point clear in Geneva; the real question is whether the Soviet Union will do likewise. We need first to agree on what it means. For example:

(a) the meaning of "development" with regard to permitted research. Nitze said the negotiating record is clear on this subject. He cited the paper Harold Brown had given to Karpov explaining the U.S. view on the demarcation between research and development. Brown's paper was not contested by the Soviet side. Article V was drafted on the basis of the definition of "development" contained in Harold Brown's paper. Kvitsinskiy responded by citing Gerard Smith's testimony in which Kvitsinskiy contended Smith had described the demarcation between research and development in a different way; Smith had used the term "breadboard model" to describe the point beyond research which was included in development. Nitze contested that, saying that while Gerard Smith's testimony was not inconsistent with the Brown paper, Brown's paper, not Smith's, was basic to the negotiating record of the ABM Treaty. This paper pointed out that full scale development started with observable testing of a prototype model, that is, a piece of equipment of the type which would ultimately be deployed. In any event, it is unambiguous that neither side included unobservable research in banned development. This point was made clear not only by Brown's paper but also by Smith's testimony. In fact, Nitze pointed out, the Soviet side also confirmed its similar interpretation that research would be permitted by the ABM Treaty when former Defense Minister, Marshal Grechko, explained to the Supreme Soviet that the Treaty imposed no limitations on the performance of research and experimental work toward defending the "national territory." Kvitsinskiy corrected Nitze, saying that Marshal Grechko made no mention of "national territory;" rather, he made reference to defending "the country" against nuclear missile attack. (Kvitsinskiy laughed heartily when he "corrected" Nitze). Nitze said it seemed ludicrous in the context of the ABM Treaty to draw a distinction between "the country" on the one hand and "national territory" on the other; one could not walk history back with some simple-minded joking distinction.

14

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-3-

(b) Returning to the Brown/Smith discussion, Kvitsinskiy insisted there was a distinction between Smith's definition of "development" and Brown's. Smith's testimony exempted only Department of Defense research and development line items 6.1 and 6.2, while Brown's would have the cut-off point be within 6.4, he referred to 6.4(a) and 6.4(b).

(c) Nitze brought up the Krasnoyarsk radar. He said that everyone on the U.S. side, in and out of Government, is convinced that this is a violation of the Treaty. Kvitsinskiy asserted that the U.S. radar at Thule, Greenland, violated the Treaty. Nitze emphasized that while the U.S. believes there is nothing here that is contrary to the ABM Treaty, the main point he was making was that the issues should be talked out frankly and settled -- not limiting the discussion to stereotype assertions such as those to which the Soviet side has limited itself.

(d) Nitze cited the Soviet laser program being conducted at Sary Shagan as an example of Soviet "SDI-type" research. Nitze said this is germane to the ABM Treaty and thus pertinent to the defense and space negotiations. He asked rhetorically why can't the Soviet side discuss its SDI-type programs; the U.S. is willing to do so and, in fact, has discussed its programs at Geneva in some detail. Kvitsinskiy responded that it (the Soviet laser) is not pertinent since it cannot damage a satellite. Nitze noted that in any event, it is permitted because it is at an agreed test range. Nitze maintained Kvitsinskiy had apparently missed the point; on any issue where there was not coincidence of views, it should be discussed frankly and resolved -- not swept under the rug by assertion of one side or the other. Kvitsinskiy then noted the testing of a U.S. laser on Maui (in connection with a recent space shuttle flight). He asked rhetorically if that laser could substitute for a radar and if Maui was part of the Kwajalein test range. Nitze replied that the U.S. would be willing to discuss the issue frankly and constructively.

5. Referring to the Geneva negotiations, Kvitsinskiy asked when the U.S. side was going to propose something concrete on space. Nitze replied with a question of his own: "Which should come first, working on what the Soviets want on space, or on what the U.S. wants on limiting offense?" Nitze said that the Soviet form of linkage is unacceptable; this amounts to preconditions. Preconditions need to be forgotten and replaced with constructive discussions of the issues.

6. Nitze continued by asking what specifically are the Soviets suggesting with respect to limitations on the offense. Kvitsinskiy said that the Soviet side cannot be more specific

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15

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-4-

until and unless it knows the outcome for space. He added that the Soviet side had made a specific proposal in the recent round just completed. Nitze replied that with what the Soviet side had given at Geneva, one could only speculate on possible methods of aggregation consistent with what they had said, coupled with various applicable percentages. For example, as to the Soviet form of aggregation, Nitze asked what was to be included in the Soviet term "nuclear charges." This form of aggregation appeared to include gravity bombs and SRAMs. Nitze said Kvitsinskiy knew the long-held U.S. view on this issue; namely, that it was improper to constrain such bomber loadings without corresponding constraint on air defenses. Nitze went on to explain that the two sides had to work out specific and equitable counting rules to have an effective agreement. He emphasized the unacceptability of aggregations which equated "elephants with flies;" SS-18 RV's cannot be equated with gravity bombs.

7. By way of example, Nitze said that if one were to assume that counting rules had, in fact, been worked out, what could be made of the so-called Soviet "model" surfaced in Geneva? Continuing, Nitze said that low overall SNDV limitations could become meaningless or counter-productive at low levels of RVs, or even of "nuclear charges". Continuing his example, Nitze said that if one were to assume a base level of 10,000 "nuclear charges" with an agreed reduction of 40%, this would result in a ceiling of 6,000 such "charges" at the end of a given period. If one were then to combine this figure with the Soviet suggestion of a percentage limit on the number of "charges" in any one leg of the deterrent, and assume that this limit was 50%, then the Soviet side would be able to retain 3,000 highly capable RVs on its ICBM force. This is more than a sufficient number to launch a highly successful attack against the land-based portion of the U.S. retaliatory force. Without other compensating provisions, such an outcome would be insufficient to meet the needs of the U.S. side.

8. Nitze suggested that we should abandon all the propaganda play with numbers and get down to discussing a comprehensive and substantive end result. Nitze said the U.S. needs protection in an agreement against the Soviet capability for an effective strike against its land-based retaliatory forces; if that can be worked out, all kinds of things become possible.

9. Kvitsinskiy responded by saying that the U.S. was threatening Soviet land-based forces with Trident missiles. Nitze replied that the Trident I offers no such threat and the D-5 will not be along for some years. The point was, Nitze emphasized, that if the Soviets relieve the U.S. of the threat

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to the survival of its land-based assets, the U.S. could comparably relieve the Soviet side of such a threat to its forces. The sides should talk constructively about this and resolve the issues necessary to a mutually acceptable agreement.

10. Continuing on sea-based systems, Kvitsinskiy insisted that SLCMs be banned. Nitze said that both sides were fully aware of the difficulties in verifying the distinction between nuclear and non-nuclear SLCMs and in verifying the range capabilities of given types of SLCMs. Kvitsinskiy said a complete ban would meet many of these problems. Nitze recalled a discussion with McClain, Director of the China Lake Naval Weapons Laboratory, who had put together a cruise missile capable of hitting a ship in the China Sea from Hainan Island with parts bought from a Montgomery Ward catalogue. SLCMs had become widely dispersed. The U.S. Navy was not going to let itself be without SLCMs when Argentina had them. Kvitsinskiy said: "But who gave the Argentines their SLCMs?" Nitze replied: "The French, but Col. Qaddafi and Castro got theirs from the Soviet Union."

11. Returning to the space issue, Kvitsinskiy asked: "What about space strike arms?" Nitze replied that if the ground-based threat is relieved, then the need for defenses diminishes. Accordingly, we should first agree to limit offenses to relieve the ground-based threat; then we can agree to appropriate limitations on defenses. Kvitsinskiy said that limitations should be made in the reverse order. Nitze said he would compromise: "Let's work toward both concurrently."

12. Kvitsinskiy alleged that some people on the U.S. side (otherwise not identified) in Geneva have said the sides can discuss establishing a ban on ASAT systems. Nitze replied that he had not heard of such. In any event, this would involve banning ABM and ICBM systems; therefore, the better course would be to discuss how we can make communications and other such satellites survivable.

13. Kvitsinskiy then asked about INF. Kvitsinskiy said the "walk-in-the-woods" formula was not acceptable to Moscow; it provided no compensation for British and French forces. Kvitsinskiy added that Nitze had once suggested indirect compensation for the British and French. (Kvitsinskiy, to support his argument that Nitze had suggested indirect compensation for the British and French, referred to a piece of paper Nitze had given him on November 19, 1983. That paper to which Kvitsinskiy referred consisted of points Nitze had been instructed by Washington to make. The paper does not

17

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-6-

make Kvitsinskiy's case but, in any event, the episode is reported fully in the attached telegram INF-739 (Geneva 0722). Nitze denied the allegation; he told Kvitsinskiy that the "walk-in-the-park" proposal included partial compensation but that was Kvitsinskiy's proposal. Nitze reminded Kvitsinskiy that he, Nitze, had never made an equal reductions proposal. Kvitsinskiy then said that it was Nitze who had made the computation concerning equal reductions of 572, resulting in 122 to 127 SS-20s for the Soviet side. Nitze accepted that; it was simple arithmetic after Kvitsinskiy had suggested he look at equal reductions of 572. Nitze reminded Kvitsinskiy that during their "walk-in-the-park" it was he, Kvitsinskiy, who said that the Soviet Government would accept equal reductions of 572 if the U.S. Government would propose such. Kvitsinskiy nodded and did not challenge the point. Continuing, Nitze said that in any event, the Soviet Union is not entitled to compensation for the British and French forces. Kvitsinskiy's only comment was to note the French had deployed another submarine; hence, the Soviet side was "now entitled to more than 122."

14. Kvitsinskiy said he would have to report to his superiors that Nitze had no proposal on space strike arms, no proposal on limiting ASATs, on limiting SLCMs or any proposals on offenses, generally. Nitze replied that his purpose during the evening had not been to make proposals. Rather, as he had said at the outset, he wanted to have a serious, frank discussion with Kvitsinskiy on how the two might work together to prepare for a substantive summit rather than an easier one. Kvitsinskiy replied, "We should talk further."

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