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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7160

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NLRR 606-114/S #8466

BY CN NARA DATE 11/29/07

FOR SECRETARY FROM HARTMAN

E. O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PREL, UR

SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH DOBRYNIN

1. ~~SECRET~~ - ENTIRE TEXT.
2. BEGIN SUMMARY: I SPENT AN HOUR AND THREE QUARTERS WITH DOBRYNIN THE EVENING OF JULY 8. HIS VIEW, WHICH HE LAID OUT AS GORBACHEV'S AS WELL, WAS THAT TIME WAS MOVING BY QUICKLY AND A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO DO SOMETHING POSITIVE MIGHT BE ESCAPING US. GORBACHEV HAD PUT OUT A COMPLETE DIAGRAM OF HIS APPROACH TO WORLD PROBLEMS AND SPECIFICALLY U.S./SOVIET RELATIONS. HE WANTED TO GO AHEAD WITH A SUMMIT MEETING THIS YEAR BUT HE COULD NOT AFFORD DOMESTICALLY OR INTERNATIONALLY TO MEET WITH THE PRESIDENT AND SETTLE NOTHING IN THE VITAL AREA OF SECURITY AND ARMS CONTROL. FOR THAT REASON, HE HAD PROPOSED A SPECIFIC ROAD MAP ON HOW TO GET THERE AND HE HOPED WE WERE EXAMINING IT SERIOUSLY. THEY HAVE NOTED GLASSBORO AND BELIEVE

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THAT THAT KIND OF PUBLIC APPROACH DOES MUCH TO MEET THEIR CONCERN ON ATMOSPHERE, ALTHOUGH THEY CANNOT UNDERSTAND WHY THE PRESIDENT DOES NOT INSIST ON ALL MEMBERS OF HIS ADMINISTRATION USING THE SAME TONE. IN GENERAL, DOBRYNIN WAS HIS BOUNCY SELF. HE RADIATED ASSURANCE AND SPOKE CONFIDENTLY OF MODERNIZING HIS VERY COMMUNIST PARTY-LOOKING OFFICE WITH ITS 1930'S DECOR. HE WAS CAREFUL NOT TO STEP ON SHEVARDNADZE'S TOES BUT, THAT DID NOT PREVENT A TONE OF TOTAL AUTHORITY AND WORLD VIEW TO GOVERN HIS CONVERSATION. END SUMMARY.

3. PROCESS

ON PROCESS DOBRYNIN SAID THAT THEY FAVORED A STEP-BY-STEP BUILDING BLOCK PROCESS. THEY HAD DESCRIBED IT IN DETAIL AND DUBININ HAD MADE IT EXPLICIT. PREPARATIONS FOR THE FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING WOULD BE BY EXPERTS, THROUGH THE EMBASSIES OR BY A SPECIAL TRIP BY BESSMERTNYKH AS THE DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER IN CHARGE FOR THEM. IN RESPONSE TO SOME PROBING HE INDICATED THAT NO ONE WOULD SIDLE UP TO US AND SUGGEST A CHANNEL. HE DESCRIBED, AS HE HAS MANY TIMES IN THE PAST, HOW THE MAN WHO DID THAT BY TALKING TO SCALI IN THE CUBAN MISSILE DAYS WAS SUBSEQUENTLY FIRED FOR UNAUTHORIZED BEHAVIOR. HE SAID, INDICATING THAT THERE MIGHT BE SOME RIVALRY, THAT OFTEN LOWLY ASSISTANTS TRIED TO BRING PRIZES TO THEIR BOSSES AND PUT THE CHATAUQUA PROBE IN THIS CATEGORY. HE SAID THAT IT WAS NOT YET DECIDED WHO WOULD GO TO THAT MEETING FROM THE SOVIET SIDE. IN ANY CASE THE BUSINESS WOULD ONLY BE DONE BY THOSE OFFICIALLY DESIGNATED TO TALK FOR THEM AND THAT I WOULD HEAR

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OR WASHINGTON WOULD BE TOLD DIRECTLY. HE WENT ON
TO SAY THAT THEY AGREED TO THE DATES IN SEPTEMBER
BUT DID NOT WANT A PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT. DUBININ,
HE THOUGHT, HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED TO EMPHASIZE ONCE
AGAIN THE PROCEDURE AND THE NECESSITY OF REAL
SUBSTANTIVE PREPARATION. IF THEY HAD REAL CONFIDENCE
IN THE ONE OR TWO AREAS WHERE PROGRESS ON ARMS
CONTROL WAS POSSIBLE, THE SOLUTION OF MANY OTHER
PROCEDURAL PROBLEMS WOULD FALL INTO PLACE.

4. SECURITY AND ARMS CONTROL

DOBRYNIN, SPENT SOME TIME DESCRIBING HOW GORBACHEV
GOES ABOUT DEALING WITH PROBLEMS. HE STARTS FROM
HIS OWN PHILOSOPHY AND BELIEFS WHICH LEAD HIM TO
BE PRAGMATIC AND LOGICAL. ALTHOUGH PREOCCUPIED
WITH DOMESTIC ORGANIZATION AND POLICY, HE HAS SPENT
HOURS AND DAYS WORKING OUT A GLOBAL VIEW OF WHERE
THEY SHOULD BE HEADED. HE (DOBRYNIN) DID NOT WISH
TO BE CURRYING FAVOR WITH HIS PRESENT BOSS BUT HE
COULD SAY OF ALL THE GENERAL SECRETARIES HE HAD
WORKED WITH GORBACHEV WAS THE FIRST TO MASTER THE
DETAILS OF POLICY AS WELL AS THE GENERAL TREND.
GORBACHEV RESENTS PARTICULARLY OUR DISMISSAL OF
HIS JANUARY 15 PROPOSALS AS PROPAGANDA. INSTEAD HE
SAW THESE AS A FRAMEWORK TO BE TAKEN UP AND ELABORATED
ON AND WITHIN WHICH TO FORMULATE SPECIFIC STEPS.
WHEN I SAID THAT IT WAS A PITY WE HAD NOT HAD THEIR
JUNE PROPOSALS IN JANUARY AS A COUNTER TO OUR NOVEMBER
GENEVA PROPOSITION DOBRYNIN DID NOT SEE THAT THE
LATEST PROPOSALS WERE ANYTHING MORE THAN A DEVELOPMENT
OF THEIR EARLIER THINKING.

5. SIMILARLY, THE CONVENTIONAL ARMS, CW, TESTING
AND OTHER SUGGESTIONS HAD BEEN PUT OUT TO GIVE

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PUBLIC EXPRESSION, TO A LARGER FRAMEWORK THAT GORBACHEV
LIKES TO WORK WITH. WITHOUT SUCH A STRUCTURE HE DOES
NOT FEEL THAT HE CAN PULL TOGETHER THE FORCES THAT
HE MUST LEAD AND COMMAND. DOBRYNIN SAID THAT WE
MADE A MISTAKE TO THINK THAT A PROPOSAL IS PUT
FORWARD FOR PROPAGANDA PURPOSES. EACH TIME AS
GORBACHEV SITS WITH SOKOLOV, AKHROMEYEV
AND HIS PARTY AND FOREIGN POLICY COLLEAGUES AND
ADVISORS, HE ASKS THE QUESTION: IF THIS PROPOSAL
IS ACCEPTED, CAN WE LIVE WITH THE CONSEQUENCES?

6. THIS LED DOBRYNIN TO A PROBING ON WHERE THE
PRESIDENT GETS HIS INFORMATION. WAS HE, FOR EXAMPLE,
CONVINCED, THAT THE SOVIETS COULD NOT ENGAGE IN AN
ARMS RACE? WAS THAT WHAT I WAS REPORTING FROM MOSCOW?
THIS GAVE ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO TELL HIM TO OPEN UP
THE CHANNELS SO THAT I COULD GET A MORE ACCURATE
PICTURE, BUT I WENT ON TO SAY THAT IN THEIR
AVARICIOUS READING OF THE AMERICAN PRESS THEY SHOULD
TAKE WITH A GRAIN OF SALT READINGS OF THE PRESIDENT'S
THINKING. SOMETIMES PEOPLE WHO WRITE STUDIES AND
SEND THEM TO HIM THEN LEAK THE RESULTS AS THE
"PRESIDENT'S THINKING." IN ANY CASE, I SAID THAT
WAS NOT WHAT I WAS REPORTING. I HAD SAID DIRECTLY
TO THE PRESIDENT AND OTHERS IN WASHINGTON THAT
RESOURCES WOULD ALWAYS BE FOUND HERE FOR AN ADEQUATE
DEFENSE BUT THAT LIKE ALL RATIONAL LEADERS IN TODAY'S
WORLD THEY MUST WANT TO SEE THAT THEIR RESOURCES ARE
USED IN THE SECTOR WHERE THE NEED IS GREATEST AND
FOR THIS THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP MUST AT LEAST HOPE
TO BUY SECURITY AT LOWER LEVELS OF EFFORT, PARTICULARLY

WHEN IT COMES TO HIGHLY TRAINED PEOPLE AND TECHNOLOGY.
BUT ABOVE ALL SOVIET LEADERS WOULD GIVE HIGHEST
PRIORITY TO DEFENSE. I SAID THAT I DID NOT BELIEVE
THAT THE PRESIDENT HELD A DIFFERENT VIEW OR HE
WOULD NOT HAVE SPOKEN THE WAY HE DID TO THE GENERAL

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SECRETARY IN THEIR PRIVATE CONVERSATION.

7. DOBRYNIN SAID THAT THE KEY POINT FOR SOVIET LEADERS WAS WHAT COULD BE ACCOMPLISHED. THEY HAD REAL DOUBTS ABOUT WHETHER THE PRESIDENT WANTS TO DISCIPLINE HIS RANKS TO ACHIEVE AN AGREEMENT. THEY KNOW, HE SAID, THAT THERE ARE THOSE WHO WANT NO AGREEMENT. GORBACHEV CANNOT AFFORD ANOTHER SUMMIT WHERE HE JUST DISCUSSES RELATIONS AND WORLD PROBLEMS., THE LEADERSHIP HAS NO PARTICULAR STEPS IN MIND BUT IT HAS TO BE SOMETHING CONCRETE. I HAD THE FEELING LISTENING TO HIM TALK, AND DISCOUNTING ALL THE SELF-SERVING ARGUMENTS THAT GORBACHEV HAD. LAID OUT HIS CONCEPT AND GOTTEN SUPPORT FOR THEM FROM HIS COLLEAGUES BUT WHILE HIS POWER WAS NOT CHALLENGED, THERE WERE KIBITZERS ON THE SIDELINES ONLY TOO READY TO CRITICIZE HIS LACK OF RESULTS. HE MENTIONED SEVERAL TIMES "THOSE WHO HAVE A VIEW BUT NO KNOWLEDGE OR RESPONSIBILITY...."

8. ON SPECIFICS, DOBRYNIN WELCOMED THE APPARENT AGREEMENT TO DISCUSS TESTING AND SAID AT LEAST THIS SHOWED THAT WE COULD TALK ABOUT PROBLEMS WHERE WE HAVE OPPOSING VIEWS. BUT HE WAS PESSIMISTIC THAT THIS COULD BE CHOSEN AS AN AREA FOR EARLY PROGRESS. HE JOKED ABOUT OUR PRIVATE CITIZENS AND WHAT THEY MIGHT CONTRIBUTE. HE DID NOT RESPOND WHEN I SAID THAT I ASSUMED THAT THE SOVIETS WERE NOT GOING TO LET THEM MONITOR A TEST BUT ONLY TAKE SEISMIC READINGS. THIS LED TO AN EXCHANGE ON VERIFICATION WHICH COVERED A VARIETY OF ARMS

CONTROL AREAS. HE SAID THAT WE SEEM TO WANT TO LOAD UP ALL OF OUR PROPOSALS WITH THE MOST INTRUSIVE VERIFICATION ARRANGEMENTS. HE CITED MBFR, CDE, AND TESTING WHERE ON RATHER MINOR AGREEMENTS WE WERE INSISTING ON ELABORATE MECHANISMS. THIS, HE SAID,

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 HAD LED GORBACHEV, TO CONCLUDE THAT VERIFICATION SHOULD BE LOOKED AT SERIOUSLY AND WHEN AN AGREEMENT CALLED FOR A MAJOR REDUCTION OR IN THE CASE OF TESTING A COMPLETE BAN, THEN VERIFICATION COULD BE JUSTIFIED AS INTRUSIVE. I POOH-POOHED THIS RATIONALIZATION AND SAID THAT THEIR CHARACTER AND HISTORY HAD MORE TO DO WITH THE ATTITUDE TOWARD VERIFICATION AND IN ANY CASE CONFIDENCE BUILDING IS NECESSARY. EVEN IN THOSE CASES WHERE A BAN HAD BEEN AGREED, E. G., ABM, WE SEE A RADAR BEING BUILT WITH NO OTHER PURPOSE. I CONCLUDED BY SAYING THAT WE AND OUR ALLIES WOULD INSIST ON MORE OPENNESS AND TRANSPARENCY IN MBFR AND THE CDE. IN THE LATTER CASE THIS ISSUE WOULD DETERMINE THE SUCCESS OR FAILURE OF THE STOCKHOLM MEETINGS.

9. ON THE GENEVA NEGOTIATION ISSUES, DOBRYNIN EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT OUR REPLY WOULD BE POSITIVE AND SUBSTANTIVE. HE SAID THAT THE NEWS REPORTS, WHICH HE ADMITTED THAT BOTH HE AND GORBACHEV READ AVIDLY, APPEAR TO INDICATE A POSITIVE TONE. HE THOUGHT THAT IT WAS AMONG THESE ISSUES THAT SOME AREA FOR PROGRESS COULD BE FOUND. THEY HAD TRIED TO PUT OUT A VARIETY OF NEW APPROACHES DESIGNED TO MEET CONCERNS AND CRITICISMS WE HAD MADE OF EARLIER PROPOSALS. IN THE STRATEGIC AREA, THEY HAD COME UP WITH MORE MODEST REDUCTIONS BUT DESIGNED TO MAKE A FIRST STEP POSSIBLE. BUT WE HAD TO RECOGNIZE

THAT BALANCE IN ANY AGREEMENT WAS NECESSARY. ON SPACE, HE HOPED THAT WE WERE SERIOUSLY LOOKING AT THE POSSIBILITY OF STRENGTHENING THE ABM REGIME THROUGH AGREEMENT ON A TIME PERIOD FOR NOT EXERCISING THE WITHDRAWAL CLAUSE AND SOME DEFINITIONAL DEVELOPMENT ON PERMISSABLE ACTIVITIES. WHAT COULD WE SAY ABOUT OFFENSIVE WEAPONS IN SPACE? ABOUT ASAT? AFTER ALL WE NEEDED SATELLITES EVEN MORE THAN THE

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SOVIETS DID. I SAID THAT I COULD NOT RESPOND BUT
THAT I WAS CERTAIN WASHINGTON UNDERSTOOD THE
IMPORTANCE OF A RESPONSE THAT TOOK FULL ACCOUNT OF
THE EFFORT MADE BY THE SOVIET SIDE. I ASKED HOW
HE THOUGHT WE SHOULD PROCEED AFTER THEY RECEIVE OUR
REPLY. DOBRYNIN SAID MUCH WOULD DEPEND ON THE REPLY.
IF IT HAD REAL POSITIVE ELEMENTS AND CONVINCED
GORBACHEV THAT WE WANTED EVEN PARTIAL, BALANCED
AGREEMENTS FOR THE SUMMIT, THEN HE WOULD ORDER FULL
STEAM AHEAD ON PREPARATIONS AND WE SHOULD GET
THE APPROPRIATE EXPERTS TOGETHER TO PREPARE THE
WAY FOR THE NEGOTIATORS TO PICK UP IN THE FALL.
I TOOK THIS TO MEAN - POSSIBLY, IT WAS NOT CLEAR -
PART OF AN AUGUST BESSMERTNYKH TRIP TO WASHINGTON.

10. REGIONAL

DOBRYNIN SAID THAT THEIR ASSESSMENT AGREED WITH OURS
ON UTILITY OF MURPHY-POLYAKOV TALKS ON MIDDLE EAST.
HE HOPED WE MIGHT FIND SOME POINTS OF AGREEMENT
THERE TO GIVE SUBSTANCE TO A HIGHER-LEVEL MEETING.
HE SUGGESTED DECLARATION ON IRAN/IRAQ MIGHT BE A
POSSIBILITY DEPENDING ON SITUATION AT THE TIME. HE
SAID THAT THEY WOULD AGREE TO ANOTHER TALK ON
TERRORISM AT SIMONS LEVEL AS LONG AS IT WAS CLEAR
THAT WE WERE NOT USING THAT MEANS TO CONDEMN
LIBERATION MOVEMENTS. I SAID I THOUGHT THERE WAS

SOME ROOM THERE FOR DISCUSSION. HE WELCOMED
AGREEMENT TO TALK ON AFGHANISTAN. I SAID THAT I
THOUGHT THAT MIGHT OCCUR AFTER THE NEXT SESSION
IN GENEVA AND AFTER WE HAD VISIT FROM PAKISTANI
PRIME MINISTER. HE HAD NO DIFFICULTY WITH THAT.
I REITERATED OUR GREAT CONCERN IF THREATS WERE
USED AGAINST PAKISTAN AND A CONNECTION MADE TO
AFGHANISTAN IN SOVIET AMBASSADOR'S RECENT DEMARCHE.

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HE HAD HEARD OF MY EARLIER TALK AND APPEARED TO THINK I WAS EXAGGERATING THE SITUATION. SIMILARLY ON MICRONESIA HE TOOK OUR POSITION ABOARD AND SAID HE WOULD LOOK INTO SOVIET POSITION IN SECURITY COUNCIL. I EMPHASIZED THAT WE DID NOT EXPECT SUPPORT: JUST NO VETO.

11. BILATERAL

ALL THROUGH OUR CONVERSATION I STRESSED IMPORTANCE OF CONTACT AT ALL LEVELS. I REMINDED HIM THAT YOU HAD BEEN TO SOVIET EMBASSY TWICE IN LAST SEVERAL MONTHS. OFFICIAL SOVIET NO-SHOW AT MY JULY 4 RECEPTION AND LACK OF RESPONSE TO MY APPOINTMENT REQUESTS WERE NO WAY TO SET NEW TONE. DOBRYNIN THEN PULLED HIS FAMILIAR OLD TRICK OF MAKING UP FACTS TO SUIT SITUATION. HE HAD BEEN UNABLE TO SEE PEOPLE IN WASHINGTON. DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER WAS AT MY RECEPTION AND THAT WAS "NORMAL." I EXPLAINED THAT IN "COLDER" DAYS OF LAST FOUR YEARS, MEMBERS OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE, HIGH-LEVEL SCIENTISTS, AND EVEN MINISTERS HAD ATTENDED. I CONCLUDED THAT GORBACHEV'S OPENNESS POLICY WAS NOT MEANT FOR TREATMENT OF AMBASSADORS AND THIS

WAS BOUND TO AFFECT THEIR VIEWS. IN THIS CONTEXT HE MADE ONE OF SEVERAL DISPARAGING REMARKS ABOUT SCIENTISTS (READ VELIKHOV) WHO TRY TO MAKE THEIR OWN POLICY, ETC.

12. COMMENT/CONCLUSION

I FOUND DOBRYNIN RELAXED AND SURE OF HIMSELF. MOST OF WHAT HE SAID WAS PROBABLY AN ACCURATE VIEW OF GORBACHEV'S STATE OF MIND. IN COMMENTING ON THE

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ATMOSPHERE IN MOSCOW HE SAID THAT BUREAUCRATS,
"AS I WOULD KNOW," ARE GREAT FENCE SITTERS AND
THE WHOLE APPARATUS IS IN THAT MOOD ON U.S./SOVIET
RELATIONS. NO ONE WANTS TO BACK A LOSER. THUS
IF YOU TOOK A VOTE PARTICULARLY AMONG NON-FOREIGN
AFFAIRS PARTY WORKERS THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY
WOULD BE NEGATIVE ON A SUMMIT. TO THIS I WOULD ADD
THE NON-BUREAUCRATIC EXPLANATION THAT SOVIETS ARE
RUSSIANS AND BASICALLY WHEN IT COMES TO BARGAINING
THEY HAVE A PEASANT MENTALITY. THEY WISH TO SEE THE
PRODUCT THAT THEY ARE BUYING BEFORE THEY SHELL OUT
THE CASH, OR IN THIS CASE THE PRESTIGE OF
BEING COMMITTED TO A SUMMIT WITHOUT KNOWING FOR
SURE THAT SOMETHING CONCRETE WILL HAPPEN THERE.
I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THIS IS ONLY A BARGAINING
TACTIC. I THINK THAT GORBACHEV WOULD CONSIDER
HIMSELF GENUINELY EXPOSED IF HE DIDN'T HAVE A
PRETTY GOOD IDEA THAT SOMETHING NOTEWORTHY WOULD
HAPPEN ON HIS FIRST TRIP TO "ENEMY" TERRITORY.
HARTMAN