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Central Intelligence Agency



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MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Shevardnadze's Approach at Vienna on Strategic Arms

Moscow probably views the Vienna meeting between Secretary Shultz and Foreign Minister Shevardnadze as an opportunity to push further for US consideration of a framework for offensive force reductions and limitations on SDI. Shevardnadze may reiterate Gorbachev's suggestion that an agreed formula be worked out to serve as joint guidance to the Geneva negotiating teams. He could propose additional meetings of experts or another ministerial meeting in order to provide an impetus to the Geneva talks. 25X1

We doubt that Shevardnadze will take an aggressive or confrontational approach. 25X1  
 Moscow views the Vienna meeting as a continuation of Reykjavik. Moreover, the Soviets probably calculate that a continued effort to engage Washington in discussions stands a better chance of generating West European pressure on the United States for greater flexibility on SDI than a "take it or leave it" approach. 25X1

- In a press conference on 30 October, Foreign Ministry press spokesman Gennadiy Gerasimov said that the Soviets would not be going to the Vienna meeting with "empty hands," but he declined to speculate whether the USSR would make changes to its Reykjavik proposals.
- In an interview in Der Spiegel on 18 October, Valentin Falin, a former Soviet ambassador to Bonn who now heads the Novosti news agency, said it was "very probable" that the USSR would unveil a new initiative in a few weeks. 25X1

Focus on SDI

Shevardnadze probably will try to keep the discussions focused on SDI, especially by seeking US agreement to negotiate on how to interpret the ABM Treaty. His strategy may be to claim that the two sides' differences on SDI result largely from Washington's failure to understand the Soviet proposal for strengthening the ABM Treaty, and he may attempt to clarify alleged US "misconceptions" along the following lines.

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[Redacted]

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- The USSR is not asking the United States to give up SDI, only to observe the provisions of the ABM Treaty.
- The Soviets do not want to change or amend the treaty, only to clarify its obligations.
- The Soviet position does not foreclose the possibility of SDI deployment in the future.
- The USSR is not seeking to prevent all ABM testing and acknowledges that testing of fixed land-based ABM systems is permitted by the ABM Treaty. [Redacted]

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Since the Reykjavik meeting, a number of Soviet officials have suggested that there is flexibility in the Soviet position on SDI testing and that Shevardnadze might bring some new proposals on this subject to Vienna. In an interview on Hungarian television on 29 October, Georgiy Arbatov said that mutual understandings on things such as how to define "laboratory" could be worked out between the two sides. [Redacted]

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Moscow probably hopes that if nothing else is achieved on this issue, the meeting will serve to portray SDI as the main impediment to reaching an agreement. [Redacted]

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START and INF

We doubt that Shevardnadze will bring new proposals in the area of strategic and intermediate-range nuclear arms reductions. He will stress that there can be no strategic offensive force reductions without agreement on SDI. He is likely to focus any discussion of strategic offensive reductions on how reductions of fifty percent would be structured and to play down second-phase reductions to any kind of a "zero" outcome. [Redacted]

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[Redacted] Shevardnadze also is likely to charge that the United States has been distorting the mutual understandings reached in Reykjavik and to assert that the President agreed there to eliminate all strategic nuclear weapons and not just ballistic missiles. He also will deny there was an understanding that allowed the United States to build up its SRINF missiles in Europe to Soviet levels. [Redacted]

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[REDACTED]

Shevardnadze almost certainly will maintain that the Reykjavik proposals are a package and that Soviet concessions are attainable only if agreement is reached on all elements. The Soviets probably will reserve the right to withdraw their concessions, claiming they were predicated upon the original formulation of the package. If pressed on the issue of INF linkage to the rest of the package, however, Shevardnadze may indicate that a separate INF interim agreement is possible on the basis of the previous Soviet proposal of 100 warheads each in Europe and a freeze on SS-20s in Asia. Moscow may calculate that such a tactic could serve to bring pressure on Washington from its allies in the Far East over the SDI issue. [REDACTED]

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### Nuclear Testing

While the Soviets will want to keep the discussion focused on the ABM Treaty and SDI, Shevardnadze may raise the nuclear testing issue, proposing that official negotiations on nuclear testing be opened with the aim of achieving a comprehensive test ban. Since the Soviets have said that agreements can be worked out in all areas even though they would have to be considered as a package, their linkage position would not seem to preclude the opening of such negotiations--a longstanding Soviet objective. [REDACTED]

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