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FM VIENNA 25X1

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MBFR

TO THE WHITE HOUSE

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[Redacted]

25X1

FM: STANLEY G. RESOR - MBFR DELEGATION - VIENNA 846
TO: IMMEDIATE SECRETARY KISSINGER (WHITE HOUSE)

1. I WANT TO CALL TO YOUR ATTENTION AN URGENT PROBLEM ABOUT OPTION 3 AND MBFR WHICH RISKS SERIOUS DELAY IN PUTTING FORWARD A NUCLEAR REDUCTION PROPOSAL TO THE EAST. I BELIEVE THAT IT CAN BE SOLVED ONLY BY YOUR PERSONAL INTERVENTION.

2. WHILE THE GERMANS HAVE DRIVEN A VERY HARD BARGAIN, MOST ISSUES INVOLVED IN THE NATO POSITION PAPERS ON OPTION 3 HAVE BEEN SOLVED OR ARE NEAR SOLUTION. THE OPEN ISSUES COULD BE SETTLED WITHIN TWO WEEKS.

State Dept. review completed.

3. THERE IS ONE EXCEPTION, THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THE WEST SHOULD REQUIRE SOME FORM OF LIMITATION ON SOVIET NUCLEAR ELEMENTS IN THE REDUCTION AREA IN CONNECTION WITH THE LIMITATIONS ON US NUCLEAR ELEMENTS WHICH WILL BE A NECESSARY PART OF OUR OWN REDUCTION PROPOSAL AND, IF SO, WHETHER THE WEST SHOULD IN THIS CONNECTION OFFER TO LIMIT US TANKS IN RETURN FOR A LIMITATION ON SOVIET NUCLEAR ELEMENTS.

4. OUR PRESENT POSITION INCLUDED IN THE PAPERS NOW BEFORE NATO CALLS FOR SUCH AN APPROACH. BUT A NUMBER OF WASHINGTON AGENCIES HAVE QUESTIONED ITS DESIRABILITY. THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT IS WILLING TO POSTPONE A DECISION ON THE MATTER, BUT ACDIA AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT ARE PRESSING TO DROP THE CONCEPT COMPLETELY FROM THE POSITION PAPERS. THESE AGENCIES HAVE BEEN WRESTLING WITH THIS PROBLEM FOR SOME MONTHS AND HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO COME TO AN AGREEMENT.

MORI/CFD C05464648

5. THE ISSUE IS COMPLICATED AND I DO NOT WISH TO GO INTO ITS MERITS HERE. IT IS CLEAR HOWEVER THAT IT WOULD TAKE SEVERAL WEEKS TO GAIN ALLIED AGREEMENT TO A FORMAL CHANGE IN THE PRESENT POSITION, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT SACEMR AND THE NATO MILITARY COMMITTEE HAVE STATED THAT THERE SHOULD BE A RECIPROCAL LIMIT ON SOVIET NUCLEARS.

6. BUT THE POINT IS THAT IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO SOLVE THIS ISSUE NOW, PRIOR TO PUTTING FORWARD OPTION 3 TO THE EAST. THIS IS BECAUSE

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ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

SCOWCROFT, MCFARLANE, RODMAN

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ALLIED TACTICS CALL FOR ATTEMPTING TO GET AN INITIAL SOVIET RESPONSE ON THE SUBSTANCE OF OUR REDUCTION PROPOSAL WITHOUT GOING INTO DETAILS ON THE QUESTION OF LIMITATIONS WHICH ARISE FROM REDUCTIONS.

7. WE THINK IT WILL BE FEASIBLE, ALTHOUGH DIFFICULT, TO HOLD THIS LINE VIS-A-VIS THE EAST. MAINTAINING THIS APPROACH WILL MEAN THAT THE WEST PROBABLY WILL NOT BE FACED BY ANY NECESSITY TO GO INTO DETAIL ON LIMITATIONS AND, HENCE, TO DEAL WITH THE QUESTION OF LIMITATIONS ON SOVIET NUCLEARS BEFORE FEBRUARY. WE CAN USE THE INTERVENING PERIOD TO REACH AGREEMENT WITHIN THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND WITH THE ALLIES AS TO THE PROPER COURSE ON THIS MATTER.

8. I THEREFORE SUGGEST THAT THE US INTRODUCE LANGUAGE INTO THE ALLIED POSITION PAPER ALONG THE LINES THAT: THE STRINGENCY OF LIMITATIONS ON SOVIET NUCLEAR ELEMENTS WHICH THE WEST CAN ASK FOR WITHOUT OVER-BURDENING THE NEGOTIABILITY OF THE OVERALL WESTERN PROPOSAL IS IN PART A FACTOR OF THE DEGREE OF INTEREST THE EAST SHOWS IN THE NEW WESTERN PROPOSAL AND OF CONDITIONS WHICH THE EAST MAY RAISE IN ITS RESPONSE. THE WEST SHOULD THEREFORE AWAIT THE INITIAL INSTRUCTED EASTERN RESPONSE ON REDUCTION ASPECTS OF THE NEW WESTERN PROPOSAL BEFORE DECIDING ON THE SPECIFIC FORM OF THE PROPOSAL TO LIMIT SOVIET NUCLEAR ELEMENTS.

9. THIS LANGUAGE WOULD HAVE THE PRACTICAL EFFECT OF DEFERRING THE ISSUE OF LIMITATIONS ON SOVIET NUCLEARS WHILE AT THE SAME TIME PROVIDING THE ALLIES A REASON FOR NOT GOING INTO IT FURTHER AT THIS TIME. IF NECESSARY THE UK AND FRG COULD BE TOLD THAT THE US IS RECONSIDERING THE ENTIRE ISSUE.

10. UNLESS THE OPTION 3 PROPOSAL IS PUT FORWARD TO THE EAST AT THE END OF NOVEMBER AT THE LATEST THIS ALLOWING TWO WEEKS FOR EXPLANATION BEFORE THE VIENNA TALKS BREAK FOR CHRISTMAS, DECEMBER 18, PLUS A PERIOD OVER THE RECESS FOR THE SOVIETS TO PREPARE THEIR REPLY, THE WEST CANNOT EXPECT EVEN AN INITIAL INSTRUCTED SOVIET RESPONSE WHEN THE TALKS RESUME AT THE END OF JANUARY. IF THE ALLIES DO NOT ADVANCE OPTION 3 UNTIL THE BEGINNING OF THE NEXT ROUND, ALLOWING NECESSARY TIME FOR REFLECTION, THE SOVIETS WILL NOT HAVE TO RESPOND BEFORE MARCH.

11. THE FACT THAT THERE WILL BE GERMAN ELECTIONS IN THE FALL OF 1976 WILL MEAN THAT IT WILL BE DIFFICULT TO MOVE IN MARCH AFTER JUNE OF 1976. FOR THIS REASON DELAY TO MARCH OF AN INITIAL SOVIET RESPONSE TO OPTION 3 WOULD JEOPARDIZE THE CHANCES OF REACHING AGREEMENT EVEN IN PRINCIPLE BEFORE THE END OF 1976.

12. I THEREFORE STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT IN THE OVERALL INTERESTS OF THE NEGOTIATIONS YOU APPROVE A POSITION ALONG THE LINES DESCRIBED IN PARAGRAPH 8 ABOVE.

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