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FM HELSINKI
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FROM: DR. YORK, HELSINKI 305

DECLASSIFIED IN PART
Authority: EO 13526
Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHS
Date: APR 07 2016

TO: HAROLD BROWN SECDEF, PENTAGON
DAVID MCGIFFERT ASD/ISA PENTAGON
W. SLOCUMBE - PDASD/ISA, PENTAGON
L. DAVIS, DEP ASST SEC DEF POLICY PLANS
RADM ROSS WILLIAMS OUSOR&E

RE: PERSONAL AND PRELIMINARY APPRAISAL OF SOVIET VIEWS ON ASAT

1. THE SOVIETS IN PLENARIES HERE HAVE SO FAR FOCUSED VERY LARGELY ON "HOSTILE ACTS" AND ONLY MENTION OTHER MATTERS, PARTICULARLY LIMITATIONS ON TESTS AND CAPABILITIES, WHEN PRESSED BY US. IN PRIVATE SESSIONS THEY SAY "HOSTILE ACTS" IS THE ONLY SUBJECT THEY ARE PREPARED TO DISCUSS AT THIS SESSION, THAT THEY HAD NOT EXPECTED US TO RAISE THE ISSUE OF CAPABILITIES, AND THAT THEY HAD EXPECTED US TO BE NOT DISPOSED TO FOREGOING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SYSTEM OF OUR OWN.

2. THEIR DELEGATION PEOPLE IN HELSINKI DENY THE SOVIETS HAVE A CAPABILITY IN BEING, BUT THEY DO SO IN A WAY THAT DOES NOT DENY THEY ARE DEVELOPING OR TESTING ONE. IN A

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© [initials] Hst, Sec Def Call [unclear]

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SEPARATE MEETING I HAD IN GENEVA JUST BEFORE I ARRIVED IN HELSINKI, SHCHUKIN (SOVIET ACADEMICIAN AT SALT) ALSO DENIED THEY HAD A CAPABILITY IN BEING, BUT IN EFFECT ADMITTED THEY WERE CONDUCTING EXPERIMENTS. THE REASON FOR THESE WERE, FIRST, TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITIES AND, SECOND, BECAUSE ONE MIGHT ONE DAY WANT TO HAVE THE MEANS OF INSPECTING SOMEONE ELSE'S SATELLITE TO BE SURE THAT IT DID NOT HAVE A NUCLEAR WEAPON ON BOARD.

3. IN DISCUSSIONS OF HOSTILE ACTS, THEY HAVE MADE THE POINT THAT LIMITATIONS ON THEM SHOULD APPLY TO ACTS AGAINST ALL FORMS OF SPACE OBJECTS, AND THAT IF SUCH ACTS ARE TO BE LIMITED OR PROHIBITED, SUCH PROHIBITIONS WOULD APPLY NO MATTER WHAT VEHICLE OR METHOD WERE USED TO ACCOMPLISH THEM. IN PARTICULAR, THEY MAKE THE OBVIOUS POINT THAT ACTS WHICH EITHER DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY MAKE USE OF THE SHUTTLE WOULD BE INCLUDED. THEY HAVE SO FAR ONLY MENTIONED THE SHUTTLE IN THIS SPECIFIC CONTEXT. IN ADDITION, THEY HAVE RAISED THE ISSUE OF "UNLAWFUL" SATELLITES (E.G. DIRECT BROADCAST SATELLITES), THOSE CREATING ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE ON EARTH AND THOSE OF THIRD COUNTRIES, AND THEY HAVE LINKED THESE WITH THE CONCEPT OF THE RIGHT OF SELF-DEFENSE IN A WAY THAT SUGGEST THEY ARE LAYING THE BASIS FOR JUSTIFYING EITHER THEIR NEED FOR AN ASAT CAPABILITY, OR, PERHAPS, GETTING US TO CHANGE OUR DBS POSITION OR BOTH. ✓

4. THEY HAVE ALSO INDICATED THEY CONSIDER CHANGING THE ORBIT OF A SATELLITE AND REMOVING A SATELLITE FROM ORBIT AS FALLING IN THE CATEGORY OF HOSTILE ACTS. IN ADDITION, THEY HAVE RAISED THE MATTER OF INTERFERENCE IN THIS SAME CONTEXT, BUT THEY HAVE DONE SO ONLY LIGHTLY AND MAINLY IN THE FORM OF QUESTIONS ABOUT WHAT WE MIGHT HAVE IN MIND. IN A BRIEF EXCHANGE ABOUT INTERFERENCE, THEY MENTIONED IN PASSING PLACING A SCREEN IN FRONT OF A SATELLITE AS AN EXAMPLE. THE WORD "JAMMING" HAS NOT YET REACHED THE TABLE. ✓

5. IN PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS, BOTH SHCHUKIN IN GENEVA AND KHLESTOV HERE INDICATED THEY PERSONALLY FAVOR LIMITING DEVELOPMENT OF ASATS AND PREVENTING AN "ARMS RACE" IN SPACE, BUT THERE IS SO FAR NOTHING IN THE FORMAL SESSIONS THAT SUPPORTS THESE PRIVATELY STATED VIEWS. ON THE CONTRARY, AS MENTIONED ABOVE, SOME OF THEIR REMARKS IN FORMAL SESSIONS SEEM DESIGNED TO JUSTIFY THE NEED FOR AN ASAT CAPABILITY.

6. THE SOVIET POSITION ON VERIFICATION IS AS USUAL: NTM CAN DO THE JOB, OSIS ARE NOT NECESSARY.

7. MY PROGNOSIS IS THAT THESE TALKS WILL END THIS WEEK. I CURRENTLY ESTIMATE THE PROSPECTS FOR WORKING OUT

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A HOSTILE ACTS AGREEMENT AT SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS ARE PROMISING. HOWEVER, THE PROSPECTS FOR ANY SORT OF AGREEMENT ON LIMITING TESTING OR ELIMINATING DEPLOYMENT CANNOT BE ESTIMATED AT THIS TIME, AND IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT THE MATTER WILL BECOME MUCH CLEARER BEFORE A SECOND MEETING, PERHAPS IN OCTOBER.

8. THE SOVIETS HAVE IN FACT STATED THEIR DESIRE THAT A HOSTILE ACTS AGREEMENT BE A MATTER FOR SEPARATE TREATMENT AND NOT CONDITIONAL ON PROGRESS IN OTHER ASAT ISSUES.
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Office of the Secretary of Defense
Chief, RDD, ESD, WHS
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Declassify: _____ Deny in Full: _____
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