

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-05 ACDA-12 CIAE-00
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DRAFTED BY EA/ANP:TJWAJDA:RLW

APPROVED BY EA/ANP:EHURWITZ

EA/RA:RMARTENS

PM:MARIETTI

ACDA:JNEWHOUSE (INFO)

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

S E C R E T STATE 055375

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, AS, PARM

SUBJECT: INDIAN OCEAN ARMS LIMITATION TALKS

1. PM DIRECTOR GELB CALLED IN AMBASSADOR RENOUF FEBRUARY 28 TO BRIEF HIM ON LATEST ROUND OF TALKS WITH USSR. RENOUF WAS ACCOMPANIED BY DEFATT FALKLAND AND EMBOFF COTTRILL. US SIDE INCLUDED MICHAEL ARIETTI (PM) AND JOHN NEWHOUSE (ACDA) WHO WERE ON DELEGATION AS WELL AS EA/RA AND ANP.

2. GELB OPENED MEETING BY STATING THAT US HAD STRESSED THROUGHOUT BERN TALKS THAT SOVIET ACTIVITIES IN THE HORN OF AFRICA WERE CONTRARY TO BOTH SPIRIT AND SUBSTANCE OF EFFORT TO ACHIEVE ARMS LIMITATION IN INDIAN OCEAN. SOVIET REACTION WAS TO DOWNPLAY THEIR ACTIVITIES AS IRRELEVANT TO TALKS.

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3. LITTLE PROGRESS WAS MADE ON ANY OF THE CENTRAL ISSUES ALTHOUGH THERE WAS SOME SLIGHT MOVEMENT WITH REGARD TO DEFINING STRATEGIC FORCES. BOTH SIDES REPEATED PREVIOUS POSITIONS CONCERNING DIEGO GARCIA, ALLIES AND ADJACENT AREAS. TECHNICAL LEVEL TALKS PROVIDED FREE AND USEFUL EXCHANGES.

4. ARIETTI NOTED THAT TWO EXPERTS GROUPS AND ONE DRAFTING GROUP HAD BEEN FORMED. EXPERTS GROUPS DISCUSSED ISSUES OF TRANSIT AND AUXILIARY SHIPS. US PROPOSED LIMITING TRANSIT TIME TO 30 DAYS. SOVIETS RESPONDED WITH PROPOSAL THAT 90 DAYS BE ALLOWED FOR TRANSIT BUT APPEARED TO BE PREPARED TO REDUCE FIGURE SOMEWHAT. GENERAL AGREEMENT WAS REACHED ON DEFINITION OF AUXILIARY SHIPS, BUT SOVIETS MAINTAIN THAT THEY SHOULD NOT BE INCLUDED IN AGREEMENT; US BELIEVES THEY SHOULD BE INCLUDED. DRAFTING GROUP MADE SOME HEADWAY IN PUTTING TOGETHER PREAMBLE AND SOME OF THE FINAL ARTICLES CONCERNING IMPLEMENTATION, ETC.

5. IN RESPONSE TO RENOUF QUERY, GELB SAID THAT IF AN AGREEMENT WOULD ALLOW SOVIETS TO UNDERTAKE ACTIVITIES SUCH AS THEIR PRESENT EFFORT IN THE HORN, THEN THERE WAS PROBABLY BASIC MISUNDERSTANDING OF WHAT AGREEMENT SHOULD ACCOMPLISH. US WOULD BE CAREFULLY REVIEWING THIS POINT AS WE DID NOT WISH TO ENTER INTO AGREEMENT THAT WOULD UNDULY LIMIT OUR FLEXIBILITY OR SURGE CAPABILITY.

6. WITH REGARD TO DEFINITION OF THE AREA, GELB SAID US HAD PUT CASE CLEARLY TO THE USSR THAT AREA TO BE COVERED WOULD HAVE TO BE DECIDED ON POLITICAL GROUNDS RATHER THAN GEOGRAPHERS' DEFINITION OF INDIAN OCEAN. WE WANTED, AND WERE OBLIGED, TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE
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VIEWS OF OUR AUSTRALIAN ALLIES WHO WERE CONCERNED ABOUT ANY LIMITATIONS ON OUR ABILITY TO FULFILL OUR COMMITMENTS TO THEM. IN ADDITION, IT WAS CLEAR THAT THE WATERS NORTH AND SOUTH OF AUSTRALIA AS WELL AS OUR ACTIVITIES IN THE COUNTRY WERE MORE CLOSELY CONNECTED WITH THE PACIFIC RATHER THAN THE INDIAN OCEAN. SOVIETS UNDERSTAND OUR POSITION MORE CLEARLY THAN BEFORE, BUT STATED THAT DEFINITION OF AREA WAS ALSO MATTER OF PRINCIPLE FOR THEM.

7. GELB SAID TIME HAD NOW COME FOR SERIOUS REFLECTION AND REVIEW OF US POSITION. DATE OF NEXT MEETING WITH SOVIETS HAS NOT BEEN SET. HOWEVER, WE WOULD LIKE TO CONSULT CLOSELY WITH AUSTRALIANS SOON -- PERHAPS THIRD WEEK OF MARCH. RENOUF SAID HE WAS EMBARRASSED BY LACK OF CANBERRA RESPONSE TO US PROPOSAL FOR DISCUSSIONS AND FELT GOA WAS STRUGGLING OVER WHO SHOULD ATTEND. USE OF TERM "TECHNICAL DISCUSSIONS" HAD PERHAPS LED SOME PARTIES IN CANBERRA TO BELIEVE ONLY MILITARY SHOULD PARTICIPATE. GELB SUGGESTED THAT "EXPERTS CONSULTATIONS" WOULD PROBABLY BE BETTER TERMINOLOGY TO USE. STATE WOULD LEAD US SIDE WITH INPUT FROM ACDA, JCS, OSD AND PERHAPS CIA. IN

RESPONSE TO FALKLAND QUESTION, GELB SAID WE WOULD NOT BE
LOOKING FOR NEW IDEAS FROM GOA WITH REGARD TO THOSE
ISSUES WHERE FIRM US POSITIONS ALREADY PUT TO SOVIETS IN
NEGOTIATIONS. HOWEVER, WE WANT THESE TO BE REAL

CONSULTATIONS AND ARE PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN
AUSTRALIAN VIEWS CONCERNING LAND-BASED STRIKE AIRCRAFT.
CHRISTOPHER

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NNN

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