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CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY SUMMARY

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18 December 1958

SOVIET MOVES AT GENEVA

Nuclear-Test-Cessation Talks

While attempting to create an appearance of some flexibility this week, the Soviet delegation to the nuclear-test-cessation talks in Geneva remained adamantly opposed to basic Western viewpoints on how to develop a reliable inspection system. Moscow continues to insist on retaining the power to frustrate any act of a control organization which might reduce Soviet freedom of action. The Soviet delegation has balked at any Anglo-American proposals which would have the effect of minimizing the need for further three-power political decisions after initial agreement.

Moscow is particularly opposed to activating an inspection team in the event of a suspected nuclear explosion without the unanimous agreement of the three "founding" powers. The Soviet delegation insists on veto powers for the three nuclear states in the central control organ, on primarily indigenous staffing of control posts in each country, on inspection by ad hoc teams created after suspected violations with concurrence by the government concerned, and on curtailing the duties of the "chief executive officer" or "administrator" of the control organ.

Prior to 15 December, Moscow may have believed it could split the Western delegations on the issue of majority control. London had advised its delegation that pressure in the House of Commons made it desirable that a White Paper on the conference be issued for use in parliamentary debate. The US delegation reported on 7 December that its British counterpart, in its desire to create the impression of substantial

progress before the Christmas recess, had blurred the issue of majority control to some extent by talking of the possibility of unanimity on some issues.

However, the introduction on 15 December of additional US draft articles which provide for a comparatively automatic control mechanism that could not be hamstrung by a suspected violator and which were obviously approved by the British delegation before introduction, has probably dispelled any Soviet hopes of a Western split.

The Soviet delegation promptly rejected the American proposal which would authorize the administrator to proceed with inspection of a suspected violation 24 hours after having notified the commission unless the latter, by a two-thirds vote, were to decide against the investigation. Soviet delegate Tsarapkin alleged that too many of the powers and functions which should belong to the commission were given to the "all-powerful" administrator in the Western draft. He also stated that the commission should decide upon on-the-site inspections in every case on the basis of concrete circumstances. He warned against attempts to establish a control system which would encroach on state security.

The Soviet delegation on 12 December approved article three of the draft treaty. This article identifies principal components of the international control organ, including a chief executive officer to be known as "the administrator." However agreement was reached only after the Western delegates assured Tsarapkin that the administrator would be responsible to the

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commission, thus leaving the issue of voting procedures open.

On 17 December the Soviet delegation approved a British draft proposal calling for a seven-member control commission on which the three nuclear powers would have permanent seats.

Tsarapkin suggested privately that the commission be composed of three from each "side" and one neutral. Ambassador Wadsworth suggests that Soviet interest in composition of the commission may indicate that Moscow is considering a move away from its insistence on a veto.

On 16 December, the Soviet delegate proposed that control provisions of the draft treaty be turned over to a working group while the conference continued discussion of the "political" draft articles. Moscow probably intends to point to Western rejection of the Soviet proposal as further evidence of Western "stalling" to avoid agreement.

An analysis of Soviet propaganda underlines the fact that Moscow will be unwilling to compromise on the majority control issue. After having switched on 8 December to a more optimistic line in view of agreement on the first two draft articles, Soviet propaganda became more pessimistic again on 13 December, attacking Western "evasions" at the talks.

A Pravda editorial on that day criticizes the Western position on a one-year ban, voting in the control organ, and the mobile inspection concept. Pravda alleged that "to insist on these conditions means to bring the matter to the collapse of negotiations." Moscow radio

has also taken a more critical attitude toward the Western position at the talks, although it has not suggested the possibility of break-off.

Surprise-Attack Talks

On 12 December V. V. Kuznetsov, chief Communist delegate to the talks, submitted a lengthy proposal intended to appear to be addressed to the technical aspects of the surprise-attack problem but which is in fact an elaboration of the omnibus plan previously rejected by the West linking surprise-attack measures to specific disarmament steps. Withholding the move until after the date--18 December--for suspending the talks was agreed upon was probably calculated to enable the bloc to avoid serious discussion of the proposal. Moscow probably hopes this document will complete and strengthen the record of the Soviet position in the talks and will counter Western charges that the Communist delegation refused to discuss the technical aspects of the problem.

On 15 December Kuznetsov informed US delegate Foster that Moscow now insists on including in a final communiqué a specific date for reconvening, reversing earlier informal agreement to omit such a date. Moscow probably calculated that Western rejection of this request would strengthen its propaganda position for placing the onus for breakdown on the West. Soviet propaganda media are already alleging that Western insistence on breaking off the talks without provision for reconvening on a particular date may be an attempt "to bring about total collapse of negotiations." [REDACTED]

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