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CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY SUMMARY

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NUCLEAR TEST BAN NEGOTIATIONS

The Soviet delegation has maintained virtual silence in the Geneva conference but has indicated that Moscow will prepare a comprehensive reply to the new Western proposals. In private discussions on 22 and 23 March, chief Soviet delegate Tsarapkin urged Ambassador Dean to be patient and await a Soviet response after the United States [redacted] complete development of their proposals. He told the ambassador that he would continue to listen to the American plans with interest and that the USSR was anxious to bring about a successful conclusion to the negotiations.

In the conference session on 24 March, Tsarapkin reiterated the Soviet delegation's intention to wait until the end of the US [redacted] presentation before commenting in detail. He claimed that since the US position appeared to be a "package" proposal, an analysis and evaluation of individual points could not be given until conclusion of the Western explanations.

During a private conversation with the chief [redacted] delegate on 27 March, Tsarapkin avoided any comment on the Western proposals but repeated his familiar line that the USSR had made all the concessions. He claimed that the Soviet proposals would be adequate to control a test ban; he characterized a ban as a measure of "extremely limited significance," stating that any treaty would be an experiment in international control, and should therefore begin with only a minimum of control features.

Tsarapkin agreed with the [redacted] suggestion that the end of [redacted] may be a target date for concluding a treaty, but only if the Soviet terms were accepted. He made only brief mention of the Soviet proposal for a tripartite administrative

council to supervise the control system, and made no reference to French testing. The [redacted] gained the impression that the Soviet delegation was prepared to continue negotiations through the summer.

The only substantive point raised by Tsarapkin at the conference concerned freedom of action of the three powers to resume small underground tests when the voluntary moratorium on these tests expired. Fore-shadowing the probable line of attack on this issue, he asked whether the American proposals admitted the possibility of resuming underground tests at that time. The USSR has previously insisted that the three powers should not be automatically free to do so.

A member of the Soviet delegation has also indicated privately that it will insist that there be only 15 control posts for the USSR, rather than the 19 proposed by the West, and will hold out for Soviet representation on the inspection teams. He stated that the Soviet delegation regarded the new American proposals as bargaining counters.

Outside the conference, Tsarapkin has continued his sharp criticism of the new American [redacted] proposals. In an interview with a CBS correspondent on 23 March, he stated that the Western proposals contained little new and showed that the US continued to hold an unacceptable position on such questions as the number of on-site inspections, the staffing of control posts, and on-site inspection teams, and the scientific criteria for determining which detected seismic events qualified for on-site inspection. He applied the same term to the US position on the number of control posts in the USSR, the duration of the moratorium on small underground tests, and a "number of other questions."

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Tsarapkin took a similar line in an interview with a correspondent of the Italian Communist newspaper L'Unita on 24 March. In an interview with a representative of the Polish press service on 25 March, he subdivided the American plan into three parts: 1) questions on which the US takes the same attitude as in the past; 2) certain issues on which the West has made a short step forward, and 3) those points on which the West approached the Soviet compromise proposals. Without spelling out the specific issues, Tsarapkin declared that even the rare concession seemed "illusory" and qualified by numerous conditions and reservations.

Communist sources in Geneva have also echoed Tsarapkin's pessimism. An Izvestia correspondent told an American observer that the Soviet Union would have to put the whole test ban negotiations into the framework of complete and general disarmament "if the Americans failed to produce some other useful ideas." A prominent Italian Communist reported that Tsarapkin, in a private conversation, belittled the Western concessions and stated that things looked bad for the success of the conference.

Tsarapkin has also used press interviews to repeat his warning on the "negative effect" of continued French testing and to underscore the importance of the Soviet proposals for a tripartite administrator for the control system. In the Polish press service interview he repeated his statement, given at the opening session, on the "negative influence" of French testing on the negotiations. Tsarapkin stated that continued testing by France "would render questionable the efficacy of an agreement." He told CBS that French tests threatened to nullify the possibility of concluding a treaty. In private talks a member of

the Soviet delegation pointed out, however, that these warnings did not pose any preconditions for further negotiations.

On the question of a three-member administrative council, Tsarapkin termed it a "fundamental problem" and "of paramount importance." Ambassador Thompson believes that the Soviet plan for a three-member secretariat to replace the UN Secretariat has become basic Soviet policy and that Moscow, therefore, will probably maintain its position on the three-member council to administer a test ban even to the point of a breakdown in the talks at Geneva.

The volume of Soviet propaganda commentary on the negotiations last week was higher than for any week since the negotiations began in the fall of 1958. Peiping has remained silent on the negotiations. The revised Western proposals were broadly characterized by Soviet propagandists as "nothing new," and a widely broadcast comment claimed they were intended as "psychological preparation for torpedoing" the talks. Moscow's commentators have also reported, however, that the Soviet delegation must await the explanation of the Western plan before appraising the individual proposals. Wide publicity has been given to the Soviet proposal for a tripartite administrator and to Tsarapkin's warnings against further French testing.

Although there is no explicit threat of a Soviet test resumption nor any demand that France join the negotiations, a broadcast to France on 27 March claimed that an "effective" international agreement is "hardly possible" so long as "one of the European great powers" continues testing. TASS on 28 March reported the Soviet delegation had pointed out that French testing complicates not only the Geneva talks but the whole disarmament problem. [REDACTED]

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