

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY SUMMARY

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NUCLEAR TEST BAN NEGOTIATIONS

The Soviet delegation has continued to accept only those Western concessions which correspond to previous Soviet positions, while criticizing other proposals as unacceptable. At the conference session on 10 April, Chief Soviet delegate Tsarapkin announced acceptance of the Western plan for an 11-member control commission composed of four representatives from the West, four from the bloc, and three from neutral countries.

He divided the remaining Western proposals into those which were still unacceptable and those which showed only an appearance of "movement." In the latter category he placed the moratorium on underground testing and the number of control posts to be set up in the USSR. He claimed, however, that the Western plan would lead to a situation in which control posts would be operating in the Soviet Union after two years, while the US would be free to conduct underground tests a year later, when the moratorium expired.

On 12 April he repeated Moscow's insistence that 15 control posts be installed in the USSR during a four-year period, rather than 19 posts as proposed by the West. The Soviet delegate also said that no inspections could be made until the end of this period. On other key issues he charged that the US continued to advocate "unacceptable attitudes."

The Soviet representative has adopted the familiar tactic of pressing for immediate agreement in principle on the points accepted by Moscow, despite

significant areas of disagreement on details. The Soviet delegation urged the Western powers to indicate that general agreement has been reached on a permanent ban of high-altitude testing, on internal inspection of nuclear devices used in the research program for improving detection methods and in the peaceful uses program, and on a veto over the total budget for the control system and the composition of the control commission.

On 10 April he claimed that recording agreement on these items would be of "enormous significance" and demonstrate that the conference was making progress. Soviet propaganda has used Western refusal to stress that the West bears the responsibility for leading the talks into an impasse.

The current Soviet tactic of picking certain points for agreement without offering new counterproposals on unresolved issues suggests that the Soviet leaders feel further Western concessions can be obtained. Press reports from [redacted] quote a "high Communist diplomatic source" as stating that within a week or ten days Moscow will give a generally unfavorable reply to the over-all Western plan, persist in its opposition to 20 on-site inspections each year in the USSR, and insist on a tripartite council for administering the control system.

Soviet diplomats have hinted privately, however, that a compromise might be arranged. Such a compromise might take the form of an explicit Soviet assurance that the veto in the proposed tripartite council would not apply to on-site

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inspections within the agreed quota, in exchange for Western agreement to scale down the number of inspections for the Soviet Union.

A member of the Soviet delegation told a Western official that the real sticking point was not the Soviet proposal for a tripartite administrative council but the inspection quota. He claimed that the USSR had previously given up veto rights over on-site inspections, and that in return the US should give up something on the number of inspections.

In an off-the-record interview with CBS correspondent Schorr on 8 April, Tsarapkin adopted a liberal interpretation of the Soviet tripartite proposal, implying there would be no Soviet veto over inspections. While asserting that the USSR would adhere to its proposal, he claimed that this would not reduce the effectiveness of the control procedures, since a request for inspection by any treaty member would "automatically" result in the dispatching of an on-site inspection team. When the tripartite plan was originally introduced, Tsarapkin stated that decisions would have to be unanimous.

Tsarapkin also said French tests would "hamper" the negotiations and pointed out that he had chosen this word deliberately rather than a stronger term which would imply a breakdown in the conference. The Czech foreign minister, in an

interview with UPI, also used the same language to describe the effect of further French testing, which suggests that the bloc is attempting to soften the impact of Moscow's original charge at the conference that a French test would render a treaty "pointless."

Tsarapkin's more moderate line in this conversation suggests that the USSR may be concerned that the conference will break down over its tripartite proposal, and that the Soviet leaders are attempting to give the Western powers some assurance that the proposal is subject to modification. At the same time, the Soviet leaders may be attempting to convince the West that the next French tests will not be used as a pretext for a Soviet walkout.

Soviet propaganda coverage of the conference, however, continues to be highly pessimistic. Vice President Johnson and the American delegations were [redacted] Pravda on 9 April as demanding acceptance of Western proposals in an extremely ultimative manner, with the implication that the West will break off the talks if the Soviets do not agree. Pravda claimed that a campaign was developing in the West aimed at "wrecking the talks." Senator Gore's message to the President was cited as support for the contention.

Newsweek magazine was also cited as disclosing that the basic task of the Western delegations was how to end the talks

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without giving the USSR the propaganda advantage. Izvestia on 10 April also emphasized these charges, while noting

that the American proposals contained "some positive points." [REDACTED]

