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Aide Memoire on Lunch with Nikita Smidovich

10 August 1989

Smidovich (S.) is now head of the USSR negotiating team for a chemical weapons convention (CWC).

I picked up S. at 1 p.m. at the USSR mission for CD negotiations (Chambesy). At the restaurant (Collex-Bossy) we first went over Matt Meselson's (MM) editorial prepared with Julian Robinson (JR) for the CW Bulletin published by FAS. S. made two corrections in his own hand, the most important one being to delete the reference to a 4 month time limit for action to be taken for initialling a CWC (attached).

We then proceeded to the questions raised by MM. S. divided bilateral agreement on stocks as follows:

- Exchange data on exact location of stocks-stage 1
- Exact inventories data - stage 2
- Accuracy verified on stocks at declared sites by inspection teams
- Challenge inspections. S. said this could be anywhere (undeclared sites) and was being opposed by military especially on USA side, but also with some questions by Soviet military.

S. then went over the steps towards a finished CWC as follows:

1. When rolling text is finalized, approval is obtained at CD = initialling
2. Report sent to GA of IN - open for official signature and then to governments for ratification

USSR has stated that prior to initialling stage they are willing to have the exchange of data and to have the inspections conducted. When I tried to fix the mention of the 4 month interval, he said this was a statement by the USSR but the USA reaction is not known and is to be discussed (Mikulak will arrive in few days; this extra bilateral session will last 2 weeks). Four months was the time for initialling a CWC after a joint statement was made of bilateral intent to sign. The "intent" was to encourage other countries to prepare to initial. This will have to be clarified at our next meeting.

S. does not see any major technical difficulties to be overcome in the rolling text but many points remain to be resolved. He voiced great exasperation that in the CD negotiations the USA has blocked any insertions in the rolling text, even ones that had been previously agreed. He believes there is a bureaucratic block in Washington, given that at high political levels (Blash, Baker) the USSR believes there is a sincere desire for pushing forward. He felt that MM. and Pugwash should exert every effort to pinpoint the blocks and overcome them. He kept repeating that the USA is responsible for the complete impasse reached in the CD. He noted that the bilateral talks were in a very narrow range - data exchange and inspection, but that left the rest of the range of problems open. The US group is undoubtedly following instructions, S. said, but "who is writing them?"

When I asked about difficulties other countries might raise towards a CWC, he replied he anticipated some from countries like China, India and even the UK,

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he replied that he saw Federbery in London in April, but said nothing more. I stated that MM.'s group merely wanted to visit the city, speak to people there, may be visit a cemetery, but not necessarily to visit the designated facility, although I was not sure about the latter point I told him.

I was with S. for 1 hr. 45 minutes. We agreed to have lunch together again next week. He would not know his schedule until Monday and we would try to meet again as soon as possible thereafter.

MM. telephoned me as I was entering the office and I transmitted the above information to him. I then telephoned Julian in France and did likewise. I forgot to tell Julian that S. had asked his embassy in London to contact him in June, when S. was there, but Julian did not call back.

Typed by Madeleine Satin
Copies sent to MM and JR, 11 Aug.