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BUREAU DU REPRÉSENTANT  
DU GROUPE PERMANENT

OFFICE OF THE STANDING GROUP  
REPRESENTATIVE

LOM 217/64

2nd July 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR : Secretary, Standing Group

SUBJECT : Eighteen Nation Disarmament Committee

Reference : LOM 215/64, dated 2 July 1964

1. At the Council meeting on 1 July, General E.L.M. Burns, Representative of Canada to the Eighteen Nation Disarmament Committee (ENDC) made an oral briefing on developments at the resumed negotiations. The text of his briefing is attached for your information.

2. During the discussion that followed the main points made were:

a) The Belgian Representative pointed out that there was a contradiction between the rather flexible and reasonable attitude of the new Soviet Representative at the ENDC (Mr Zorin) and the pessimistic statement made by Mr Krushchev on disarmament prospects during his recent visit to Denmark.

b) As a possible explanation for this, General Burns said that Mr Krushchev was no doubt disappointed by the results of the previous ENDC session and the reluctance shown by the neutral and Western members of the Committee to go along with Soviet proposal for any general and complete disarmament not linked with an agreed verification system. But on the other hand, it was quite impossible for the Soviets to leave the ENDC without losing face and this might have lead them to continue discussions by showing a more flexible attitude; Mr Zorin's own personality and seniority in international negotiation should also be taken into account.

c) The Norwegian Representative expressed the view that it might be the US initiatives taken at Geneva which have resulted in this change in the Soviet attitude.

d) The Belgian and Norwegian Representatives, referring to the specific statement that the US intends to present at Geneva on 9 July, on verification procedures to accompany a freeze on nuclear delivery vehicles (see reference), stated that their governments fully supported this initiative. General Burns said that such an initiative was welcomed by all the Western members of ENDC.

e) The Norwegian Representative expressed the feeling that the Soviet proposal on a "nuclear umbrella" and the US proposal for a freeze of nuclear delivery vehicles seemed to indicate a change in both Soviet and US attitudes in the ENDC. He asked General Burns whether in his opinion this might lead in the long run towards some agreement on effective disarmament. General Burns replied that the Soviet proposal on the principle of a minimum deterrent, as it stood, was not acceptable to US and needed to be discussed. The US Representative pointed out that it was wrong to believe that the US proposal reflected a change in US attitude. He emphasized that US view for disarmament linked with an agreed control and verification system had always been the basis of their policy and that the US initiatives were made within the framework of this policy. In reply to the remark made by the Belgian Representative that the US approaches seemed new, even though their attitude was unchanged, he added that perhaps this matter could be discussed later.

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FOR THE STANDING GROUP REPRESENTATIVE

*K. HUNT*

K. HUNT  
British Officer

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SCA

Encl: Notes for General Burns  
General Briefing of SAC, 1 July 64

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Notes for Oral Briefing of NAC - - July 1, 1964

INTRODUCTION

Mr. Chairman,

This morning I shall try to give members of the Council an outline of developments in the ENDC since we reconvened on June 9. Although it is too soon to say whether we shall be able to arrive at any definite agreements during the present session, there have been a number of indications that the Soviet Union may want the Conference to take a step forward at this time. As you are aware, Mr. Zorin is the Soviet representative at the Conference table at the present time. He is, of course, a more senior negotiator than Tsarapkin who represented the Soviet Union at the last session. At least thus far he has made an obvious effort to present the Soviet case in as flexible and reasonable terms as possible. As a result, the atmosphere in the Conference has been remarkably relaxed and free from polemics.

During its first week there were two meetings of the Conference devoted to general debate. Since then, on the recommendation of the co-Chairmen, we have reverted to the practice of discussing general and complete disarmament on Tuesdays and collateral measures on Thursdays.

GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT

In the field of general disarmament attention has focussed on the Soviet proposal, which Mr. Zorin presented in his opening statement, to establish what he call "a working organ" to examine the details of the reduction of nuclear weapons vehicles. He claims that this move represents acceptance on the part of the Soviet Union of a proposal made at our last session by the then Indian representative, Mr. Trevedi. Just what the Indian representative had in mind at that time is not entirely clear, but Mr. Zorin's own interpretation runs as follows: The Gromyko proposals for the reduction of nuclear weapons vehicles are aimed at establishing a "nuclear umbrella" consisting of a limited number of nuclear weapons vehicles which would be held by the Soviet Union and the United States until the end of the disarmament process. The numbers of such vehicles would be strictly limited and reductions to this agreed level would take place in the first stage. These proposals, Mr. Zorin now asserts, embody the principle of a minimum deterrent, a principle which he says is widely accepted in the West. If the western powers at the Conference will accept the principle of a "nuclear umbrella" as the basis for

negotiations, the Soviet Union will participate actively in an examination by experts of the concrete details involved in incorporating it into a comprehensive plan of disarmament. Zorin has said that the working group would discuss such questions as the numbers of nuclear weapons vehicles which would form the nuclear umbrella, their type and destructive capability, their distribution, the order in which they would be reduced, and the control procedures which would accompany this measure.

It is not yet clear whether this proposal represents a positive change in the Soviet position. It is interesting that the Soviet representative now concedes that the Gromyko proposals are related to the concept of minimum deterrence. Members of the Council will recall that at earlier sessions the Soviet Union claimed that its proposals would eliminate the threat of nuclear war from the beginning of the disarmament process and that hence they had nothing to do with the idea of deterrence, minimum or otherwise. Another point which may have some significance is that Zorin has denied that the Soviet Union proposes that all but 97-99% of nuclear weapons vehicles should be liquidated in the first stage, an interpretation which the West drew from a statement made by Tsarapkin at the last session. Zorin now implies that the extent of the reductions which should be effected to establish the nuclear umbrella is a matter for negotiation, and hints that the West would find the Soviet Union flexible on this score.

It is evident, however, that whether or not there has been any significant evolution in the Soviet position, a basic problem remains which will prevent the establishment of a working group on this fundamental issue unless it is resolved. The Soviet Union still insists that before they will engage in the sort of detailed examination of the reduction of nuclear weapons vehicles which the West has always sought, the Committee must accept "in principle" the proposal for a "nuclear umbrella" before details can be discussed. Obviously the West cannot engage in a discussion on the basis of the Soviet Union proposals.

In response to Zorin, Mr. Foster, speaking for the United States, has emphasized three things: First, the West agrees to the establishment of a technical working group to deal with the problem of nuclear weapons vehicles. Second, the terms of reference of the working group should be consistent with the appropriate item of the agreed procedure of work for general disarmament. That item on our agenda reads as follows: "Disarmament measures in regard to nuclear weapons delivery vehicles including the problems pertaining to the

production of such vehicles together with appropriate control measures." Thirdly, Mr. Foster has emphasized that all proposals and considerations relevant to this agenda item should be open for discussion in such a working group. In other words we welcome the idea of getting down to a detailed examination by experts of this most crucial of all the problems in general disarmament. What we are not prepared to do is to enter a working group whose terms of reference would preclude the examination of western proposals for the balanced and safeguarded reduction of nuclear weapons vehicles.

It was natural in the circumstances created by Zorin's proposal that some of the neutrals would be tempted to try their hand at submitting formulae or terms of reference which might represent a compromise acceptable to both sides and would permit the establishment of a working group on this problem. The representative of Nigeria a week ago did just this when he proposed that the group be set up under a formula involving "the acceptance by both sides of the concept of a nuclear umbrella at the earliest possible point in the disarmament process to be eliminated at the end of the disarmament process, coupled with a firm undertaking to eliminate all other means of delivery of nuclear weapons at the earliest possible time." Although the Nigerian representative intended that this formulation should be wide enough to admit discussion of the USA proposals, the net effect came perilously close to the Soviet position. Zorin's immediate response was to welcome the Nigerian statement.

The western delegations in Geneva are agreed that if the Soviet Union is genuinely anxious to see a working group established which will examine in concrete, technical terms the reduction of nuclear weapons vehicles, Zorin will ultimately be amenable to terms of reference broad enough to allow the full discussion of all proposals. We are, therefore, disinclined to become engaged in the search for some form of words before the real nature of Soviet intentions and objectives have emerged.

#### COLLATERAL MEASURES

A significant improvement has been introduced into the Committee's handling of collateral measures at our Thursday meetings as a result of the adoption of a recommendation by the co-Chairmen for the agenda for the period ending July 16. This agreement was based on the adoption of a list of five measures, two of which for, our present purposes, are regarded as distinctively western in inspiration, namely, the freeze on strategic nuclear weapons vehicles and the cutoff of production of fissionable materials; two chosen by the Soviet Union, bomber destruction and the reduction of military budgets.

The fifth, non-dissemination, is regarded as a joint item. The agreed procedure has resulted in one meeting devoted to general debate and , one meeting at which there has been a parallel discussion of the cut-off and military budgets. Tomorrow we expect a discussion on the joint item of non-dissemination. Thereafter, on July 9, discussion will centre on an item selected by the United States at which time we hope that the United States delegation will be in a position to present to the Conference its elaboration on the freeze proposal which I understand is now being considered by the Council.

On July 16 a Soviet item will be up for discussion. It is to be expected that Zorin will choose to concentrate on the reduction of military budgets.

Last week, the United States delegation gave the Conference a quite detailed picture of the verification procedures which it envisages should accompany the cutoff of fissionable material. Mr. Foster emphasized the flexibility which the USA adopts as regards the framework for the negotiations of this measure, and pointed out that USA proposals encompassed a range of alternatives from a verified initial cutback on a plant-by-plant basis, through to the complete cessation of production of weapons-grade fissionable material. He also emphasized that every effort has been made to avoid making verification more onerous than is necessary to ensure compliance with agreements undertaken. The further development of the western position in the collateral measures field will be greatly assisted if the USA delegation is able next week to describe the verification of the freeze in similar detail.

The fact that bomber destruction appears as a Soviet item on the agenda is of some interest, and may indicate that the Soviet Union sees real possibility for an early agreement in this field. In the Conference thus far, however, Zorin has not chosen to speak extensively on this measure, except to criticize the USA proposal for the destruction of equal numbers of B47's and TU16's. For the moment it would seem that the Soviet representative will continue to emphasize the subject of military budgets. In this connection Zorin has introduced a number of modifications in the Soviet position. In the first place he has emphasized that the 10 to 15% reduction in budgets proposed by the Soviet Union would apply in the first instance to major military powers and that the special circumstances of smaller countries could be taken into account in deciding on what reductions they should undertake. Secondly, he has incorporated into the Soviet proposal the suggestion that a portion of the savings effected under such an agreement would be used for aid to less-developed countries. Finally, he has argued that if for one reason or another the West is unwilling

to move at this time toward a formal agreement to reduce their budgets, the ENDC should issue some sort of declaration or appeal during its present session, which would note with approval the unilateral reductions in military spending which have already been made, urge other countries to follow suit and express the determination of members of the Committee to make every effort to reduce their military spending. These modifications in the Soviet position do not make this measure any easier for the West to handle in the Committee, since the reduction of military spending holds out a good deal of attraction for the non-aligned. Although we are on firm ground in pointing out the very difficult technical problems which would be involved in a formal agreement to reduce budgets, it is less easy to adopt a negative attitude toward the sort of informal declaration which Zorin is urging the Committee to adopt. This is a matter which will require close consultation as the situation develops in the Conference.

When the period covered by the current procedural arrangements for the discussion of collateral measures terminates on July 16, it is to be hoped that the co-Chairman, in the light of the discussions we have had, will be able to recommend what measures the Conference should concentrate on during the balance of the present session.

Mr. Chairman, I think I have touched on at least the major developments since the ENDC resumed its work. I shall, of course, be very happy to answer any questions which members of the Council may wish to ask.