

on-site inspection if necessary. The neutrals have stressed this obligation in stronger terms than in their memorandum of April 16. However, under the neutral proposals the Soviet Union would not be saddled indefinitely with arrangements it regards as unsatisfactory and during the interim period the Soviet Union would have the opportunity to demonstrate to the ISC the validity of its claim that it can distinguish all underground nuclear explosions from earthquakes by national detection systems alone.

7. As for the Western nuclear powers, they have taken a more flexible position with respect to the possibility of an interim arrangement while at the same time they have insisted that such an arrangement should provide the same measure of guarantee against violation as would a permanent ban. The USA seems to be coming to the view that the necessity for obligatory on-site inspection has been incorporated in essence in at least some of the formulations advanced by the neutrals. Its main concern about the proposals thus far put forward centre chiefly on the character of the interim ISC (the USA believes that its members should be responsible directly to governments and not be composed of independent scientists) and also relates to how an on-site inspection would be "triggered off." On the latter point the USA has insisted that if only a very small number of on-site inspections are to be involved, the nuclear powers must have the opportunity to select which events would in fact be inspected. It maintains that if only objective scientific criteria are to be used in determining the need for on-site inspection, a very substantial number of inspections would be needed to which there is no chance the Soviet Union would ever agree.

8. The Western nuclear powers have concluded that the best tactical approach at the present moment is to keep the heat on the Russians to modify their opposition to the principle of on-site inspection. They believe that the neutral proposals have been useful in exerting additional pressure on the Russians in this respect. Until some sign from the Russians is forthcoming that they are willing to compromise on this crucial issue, the USA has decided that it would be unwise to alter significantly the proposals contained in its present draft treaties, although it will continue to express a readiness to enter into an interim arrangement which includes satisfactory safeguards.

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TELEGRAM 1957

Geneva, December 26, 1962

CONFIDENTIAL. PRIORITY.

DISARMAMENT: THIRD SESSION ENDC

Since the recently concluded session of the ENDC was brief and we have reported at length on the issues dealt with, it does not repeat not seem necessary to send you a detailed review. However, we have a few general comments, especially on the situation which we are likely to face when the Conference resumes on January 15.

2. It is clear that in the wake of the Cuban crisis and of the Sino-Indian conflict, neither USA nor USSR were prepared to negotiate effectively on disarmament when they returned to Geneva November 26. More time was needed before the implications of the changed