

process should be automatic and obligatory. Foster confessed to some doubt as to Soviet intentions regarding resumption of nuclear testing. It had been thought that USSR definitely intended to resume testing when the USA resumed and resumption had been anticipated before now. It was possible that Soviet resumption of tests was being delayed by the need to assimilate data gained from last fall's series of tests, but Foster said that on the basis of the latest estimates, there was now uncertainty as to whether in fact the Russians intended resuming testing in the near future. I thought Foster displayed some sensitivity on the score of Soviet criticism of the proposed USA high altitude tests. By way of justification, he pointed out that the Russians themselves had conducted high altitude tests last fall. He also drew a measure of reassurance from the fact that the neutrals were not repeat not voicing any great concern over the proposed tests. Foster implied that after the recess, USA would return to the conference to make renewed efforts at reaching a test ban. The President was convinced that a test ban was in the best interests of the West, not repeat not to mention the world community, and this view was fully shared by both the Pentagon and the AEC. USA was still prepared to negotiate a test ban even if this should happen to involve suspension of the present USA test series.

6. With regard to the resumption of the Conference in July, I asked Foster if any thought had been given to the possibility of ministers returning to Geneva for the reopening of the Conference. He replied that some thought had been given to it though on the whole there did not repeat not seem to be much advantage to be gained at this juncture by raising the level of discussions. I got the impression, however, that USA authorities were not repeat not entirely dismissing the possibility that the ministers might attend, and thought this question might be considered by the Four (see paragraph 3). I said that I believed that you yourself would be prepared to attend if it were thought that the presence of ministers would be helpful, and that we saw a number of real advantages in such a course. (This discussion was held before receipt of your telegram N-234 June 12[†] on basis of which I shall make a further approach to the State Department.)

7. Foster said that they had received some reports that Kuznetsov might be replacing Zorin. They have been unable to confirm this but were hopeful that it might be true since Kuznetsov was less argumentative than Zorin and more inclined to "build on facts." Foster added that USA had heard rumors that USSR might come up with a new plan after the recess. They had, however, been unable to confirm these reports.

8. In conclusion, Foster said that he would be pleased to see me at any time and that his staff would always be available, as in the past, to discuss disarmament questions with the Embassy.

[C.S.A.] RITCHIE