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INFO DESKBY 051730Z UKDEL VIENNA
INFO ROUTINE BONN, PARIS, UKDEL NATO, MOSCOW

UKDEL VIENNA FOR SECRETARY OF STATE'S PARTY

BAKER/SHEVARDNADZE BILATERAL ON 7 MARCH
SUMMARY

1. WITH THE ADMINISTRATION'S POLICY REVIEWS STILL UNDERWAY, THIS WILL BE AN OCCASION NOT TO BREAK NEW GROUND, BUT PRIMARILY TO MAKE CONTACT, SET THE AGENDA FOR FUTURE MEETINGS, AND REVIEW TOPICAL BUSINESS. BAKER WILL HOWEVER PUT HIS OWN STAMP ON THE MEETING, WITH GREATER EMPHASIS ON CENTRAL AMERICA IN THE REGIONAL DISCUSSION, AND INCLUSION OF QUOTE TRANS NATIONAL ISSUES UNQUOTE AS A SEPARATE AGENDA ITEM.

DETAIL

2. VERSCHBOW (DIRECTOR, SOVIET OFFICE, STATE) HAS GIVEN US A PREVIEW OF BAKER'S APPROACH TO HIS FIRST FULL BILATERAL MEETING WITH SHEVARDNADZE, ON 7 MARCH IN VIENNA.

3. THE MEETING WILL LAST TWO HOURS, WITH A 15 MINUTE TETE A TETE SESSION AT THE START. BAKER PLANS TO USE THIS SESSION TO TOUCH BRIEFLY ON THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION'S GENERAL APPROACH TO US/SOVIET RELATIONS (SINCE THE RELEVANT POLICY REVIEWS ARE NOT YET COMPLETED, THIS WILL BE IN VERY GENERAL TERMS: ALONG THE LINES THAT THE US HAVE AN INTEREST IN THE SUCCESS OF PERESTROIKA AND IN A MORE STABLE RELATIONSHIP, BUT THAT SOVIET RHETORIC ON NEW THINKING HAD TO BE BACKED UP WITH DEEDS). IN THAT CONTEXT, BAKER THEN INTENDS TO RAISE IRAN, MAKING THE POINT THAT THE SOVIET OFFER OF MEDIATION OVER RUSHDIE, THEIR PROPAGANDA ABOUT THE WESTERN NAVAL PRESENCE IN THE GULF, AND THEIR SIGNS OF RENEWED INTEREST IN A MILITARY RELATIONSHIP WITH IRAN SMACK OF OPPORTUNISM AND HENCE OF OLD THINKING.

4. IN THE PLENARY SESSION (WHERE THE AMERICANS WILL BE FIELDING AN 11 STRONG TEAM INCLUDING NSC AND PENTAGON REPRESENTATIVES) BAKER PLANS TO COVER THE FOLLOWING:
(I) HUMAN RIGHTS. THE EMPHASIS HERE WILL BE ON THE INSTITUTIONALISATION OF REFORMS. BAKER WAS AT FIRST RELUCTANT TO BE DRAWN INTO DISCUSSION OF INDIVIDUAL CASES AT THIS FIRST MEETING. BUT HE HAS NOW BEEN PERSUADED (NOT

LEAST BY A MEETING TODAY WITH THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SOVIET JEWRY) THAT IT WOULD SEND QUITE THE WRONG SIGNAL NOT TO DO SO. HE WILL THEREFORE HAND OVER A LIST OF 8 CASES (THE 2 REMAINING US DIVIDED SPOUSES, 5 REFUSNIKS AND SAMOILOVICH).

(II) ARMS CONTROL. CFE WOULD INEVITABLY BE A MAJOR ITEM. BAKER WILL BE PROMOTING THE NATO PROPOSALS AND SHEVARDNADZE WOULD NO DOUBT PRESS THE SOVIET AGENDA. ON CW/RABTA, BAKER WILL PRESS SHEVARDNADZE TO TAKE A MORE CONSTRUCTIVE LOOK AT THE EVIDENCE WHICH THE US HAVE PRESENTED. HE WILL ALSO UNDERLINE THE IMPORTANCE OF TACKLING THE PROBLEM OF MISSILE PROLIFERATION IN A MORE EFFECTIVE WAY. STATE EXPECT SHEVARDNADZE TO PRESS IN RETURN FOR A FIRM DATE FOR THE NEXT ROUND OF TALKS ON START, TESTING AND CW BILATERALS. BAKER WILL RESIST IN EACH CASE, PLEADING THE POLICY REVIEW HERE.

(III) REGIONAL ISSUES. THE TWO MAIN ITEMS WILL BE MIDDLE EAST AND CENTRAL AMERICA. ON THE FORMER, THE RUSSIANS HAVE ALREADY MADE CLEAR THAT THEY WILL USE THE MEETING TO BRIEF BAKER ON SHEVARDNADZE'S VISIT TO THE REGION. BAKER IS BRIEFED TO RESPOND IN STANDARD TERMS ABOUT AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE. THE NEAR EAST BUREAU HAVE RECOMMENDED THAT HE SHOULD TRY TO ENLIST SHEVARDNADZE'S HELP IN URGING THE SYRIANS TO RESTRAIN PRO-SYRIAN RADICAL PALESTINIAN FACTIONS FROM MOUNTING ATTACKS INTO ISRAEL WHICH WERE DESIGNED TO TORPEDO THE US/PLO DIALOGUE. IT IS NOT AT THIS STAGE CLEAR WHETHER BAKER WILL ACCEPT THIS BRIEF. ON CENTRAL AMERICA, BAKER INTENDS TO SIGNAL THAT THIS ISSUE WILL BE GIVEN MUCH GREATER PRIORITY IN US/SOVIET DISCUSSIONS ON REGIONAL ISSUES THAN UNDER THE PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION. HE WILL EMPHASISE THAT THE US IS PREPARED TO MAKE A NEW EFFORT TO REACH A NEGOTIATED SOLUTION (HINTING THAT THERE WILL BE NO MORE MILITARY AID FOR THE CONTRAS) AND THAT IT IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER THAT THE RUSSIANS SHOULD NOW HALT THEIR ARMS DELIVERIES TO NICARAGUA, GIVEN THAT THESE WERE A STUMBLING BLOCK TO REGIONAL PEACE EFFORTS. STATE EXPECT THAT SHEVARDNADZE WILL RAISE AFGHANISTAN, BUT BAKER WILL HAVE NOTHING NEW TO SAY.

(IV) BILATERAL ISSUES. BAKER WILL MENTION ONE OR TWO MINOR POINTS, IN PARTICULAR BILATERAL AGREEMENTS ON OCEAN SCIENCES AND ATOMIC ENERGY WHICH ARE COMING UP FOR RENEWAL.

(V) TRANS NATIONAL ISSUES. BAKER MADE PLAIN DURING HIS CONFIRMATION HEARINGS THAT HE INTENDED TO ADD THIS FIFTH POINT TO THE AGENDA. HE WILL FLAG TERRORISM (AGAIN EMPHASISING THE NEED FOR CONSISTENCY CF RUSHDIE) AND THE ENVIRONMENT AS ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION AT A LATER STAGE.

5. ON THE STRUCTURE OF FUTURE MEETINGS, VERSCHBOW SAID

THAT BAKER HAS NOW ACCEPTED AS PART OF THE POLICY REVIEW PROCESS THAT IT IS IN US INTERESTS TO MAINTAIN A COMPREHENSIVE AGENDA FOR MINISTERIAL DISCUSSIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION. BUT HE WANTS TO RETAIN A MORE FLEXIBLE APPROACH THAN SHULTZ, WITH FEWER EXPERTS ACCOMPANYING FOREIGN MINISTERS TO THEIR MEETINGS, AND WORKING GROUPS ONLY WHERE THEY WERE NECESSARY. THIS REFLECTED BAKER'S INSTINCTIVE PREFERENCE TO WORK IN A SMALL, TIGHTLY-KNIT GROUP. AS FOR THE NEXT MEETING, THE ADMINISTRATION ARE THINKING OF A VISIT BY BAKER TO MOSCOW TOWARDS THE END OF APRIL.

6. IN CONCLUSION, VERSCHBOW SAID THAT IT WOULD BE VERY HELPFUL TO HAVE AN EARLY ACCOUNT OF YOUR MEETING WITH SHEVARDNADZE ON 6 MARCH, AND WONDERED WHETHER A MEMBER OF THE BRITISH TEAM COULD MAKE CONTACT WITH HIM ON THE EVENING OF 6 MARCH (THE US DELEGATION ARE STAYING AT THE HILTON HOTEL) SO THAT HE CAN BRING BAKER UP TO DATE BEFORE THE LATTER'S MEETING WITH SHEVARDNADZE.

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