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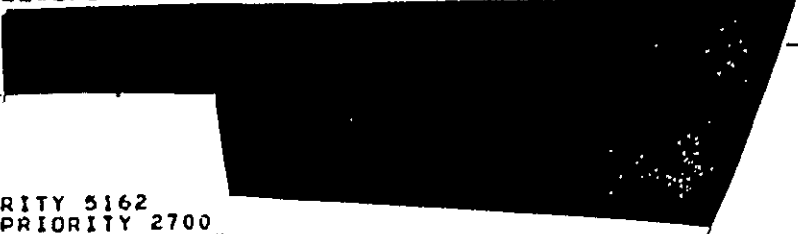


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EXDIS

E.O. 12065: GDS 4/24/86 (HELMAN, GERALD B.) OR-M  
TAGS: PORG  
SUBJECT: WHO: POSSIBLE INITIATIVE ON BW WEAPONS

1. (C-ENTIRE TEXT).

2. SEVERAL PERMREPS HAVE DESCRIBED TO AMBASSADOR HELMAN REPORTS THEY HAVE RECEIVED OF A POSSIBLE SOVIET INITIATIVE TO INVITE THE WHO TO LOOK INTO THE SVERDLOVSK INCIDENT. ONE REPORT CREDITS DR. KAPLAN, A U.S. PARTICIPANT AT THE PUGWASH CONFERENCE, WITH THE IDEA. ANOTHER DESCRIBES AN INCIDENT IN A RECENT PUGWASH MEETING IN WHICH VALENTIN FALLIN SUGGESTED THAT THE WHO BE ASKED TO LOOK INTO THE TRUE CAUSES OF THE SPREAD OF ANTHRAX AT SVERDLOVSK. GENERAL MIL'STEYN REPORTEDLY WAS PRESENT AND DID NOT DEMUR. SUBSEQUENTLY WHEN THE IDEA WAS MENTIONED TO THE SOVIET REPRESENTATIVE TO THE CD, ISRAELYAN, HE DENIED THIS WAS A SOVIET INITIATIVE; HE SAID THAT GOING TO SVERDLOVSK IS OUT OF THE QUESTION AS A MATTER OF PRINCIPLE. SVERDLOVSK REMAINS AN AREA CLOSED TO FOREIGNERS.

3. THERE HAS BEEN SOME SPECULATION AMONG NATO AMBASSADORS HERE REGARDING SOVIET INTENTIONS. THE SOVIETS ARE HARDLY LIKELY TO INVITE AN OBJECTIVE INVESTIGATION. IF THE SOVIETS INDEED HAVE SOMETHING UP THEIR SLEEVES, IT MAY BE TO INSIST THAT ANY WHO INVESTIGATION BE ON ITS TERMS, WHICH PRESUMABLY WOULD ALLOW THE SOVIETS TO STAGE MANAGE THE EVENT IN SUCH A MANNER AS MAKE IMPOSSIBLE A FINDING THAT THE PROBLEM OF ANTHRAX WAS THE RESULT OF AN EXPLOSION AT A BW STORAGE FACILITY.

4. COMMENT: IT IS NOT LIKELY THAT THE SOVIETS WILL STIMULATE SUCH AN INITIATIVE -- BUT NOT THAT THE NOTION IS ABROAD, SOMEONE ELSE MIGHT TAKE IT UP. WE ARE FAIRLY CONFIDENT THAT DG MAHLER WOULD DO WHAT HE CAN TO DISCOURAGE EXPLOITATION OF HIS ORGANIZATION IN THIS FASHION. NEVERTHELESS, IT MIGHT BE A GOOD IDEA TO PREPARE A CONTINGENCY PAPER IN THE EVENT THAT THE ISSUE IS RAISED. PRESUMABLY, IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR US TO OPPOSE AN IMPARTIAL INVESTIGATION. OUR MAIN OBJECTIVE, TOGETHER WITH OUR ALLIES, SHOULD BE TO INSIST THAT ANY INSPECTION BE OBJECTIVE AND ANY COMMISSION BE GIVEN FULL ACCESS. HELMAN

END OF MESSAGE

CONFIDENTIAL

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