

CONSULATES PLAN APPROVED BY U.S.

Missions Set in Leningrad
and San Francisco

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WASHINGTON, July 22—The United States has accepted in principle a Russian proposal for opening a Soviet consulate in San Francisco and an American consulate in Leningrad.

The State Department sent an aide-memoire to the Soviet Embassy Friday, United States officials said today, outlining this country's proposals for the consular facilities and functions and delineating the consular districts in which each mission would operate.

This note was a formal reply to a Soviet proposal of last Aug. 13, the contents of which were again conveyed orally by Ambassador Anatoly F. Dobrynin in a broad discussion with Secretary of State William P. Rogers on March 8 at one of the Ambassador's first official meetings with a member of the Nixon Administration.

Since the consular districts and other operational details proposed by the United States differ somewhat from those the Russians suggested, officials here said there might have to be some technical negotiations before final agreement could be sealed by a further exchange of notes.

Barring any political reverses, however, the two countries could be operating their consular missions within a year, for the first time since 1948.

On two other issues pending between the two countries, diplomatic sources said there had been no forward movement. Most importantly, United States officials are still awaiting word from Moscow on a date, when the strategic arms limitations talks can begin.

The Nixon Administration had set July 31 as its target date to begin the new round of disarmament talks. With no Soviet reply yet to this proposal, officials said Aug. 15 was now considered the more likely date.

Geneva seems to have been excluded as the site for these talks, partly because of the psychological connotations of Geneva as a place where disarmament negotiations become long and dilatory. It now seems likely that the missile talks may alternate between Moscow and Washington, with the detailed staff work being done in Vienna, as United States officials would prefer, or possibly Helsinki.

Ratification an Issue

The other matter is the ratification of the treaty to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, signed July 1 last year.

President Nixon suggested to the Russians that the two powers complete the formalities simultaneously, as a show of unity. Moscow has not yet replied to this suggestion, nor indicated when ratification procedures in the Supreme Soviet (Parliament) would be completed. On the United States side all that is required is President Nixon's signature on the instrument of ratification.

Before agreeing to the Soviet proposal for an exchange of consulates, the State Department cleared the idea with the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Congressmen concerned at the internal security implications of allowing Soviet diplomats to live and work in the San Francisco area.

J. Edgar Hoover, director of the FBI, is on record with the statement at a Senate committee hearing in 1967 that the establishment of Soviet consulates would "make our work more difficult." He went on to indicate, however, that he would not obstruct any agreement on exchanging consulates and that the problems created could be "handled by the FBI."

A consular convention with the Soviet Union, ratified by the United States in March, 1967, laid the legal groundwork for consular operations, but left the actual opening of consulates for further negotiation.