

Telecon
Gerard Smith
8:50 a.m. 9/3/69

Smith said he had a situation developing on the seabeds. He talked to Rogers and Laird yesterday. About two weeks ago, the Soviets came back with a counter proposal which accepted the substance of our position on denuclearization instead of demilitarization. They had accepted the 12 mile limit. Defense refuses to budge on their position of 3-mile limit. Smith feels we should accept the 12-mile limit. Most of the people in the General conference think the 12-mile limit makes sense. NAC(?) is puzzled. In addition to MAC discussions schedule for the 10th of this month, we will have a situation in the UN General Assembly if we don't appear to be making progress on this. Smith hoped that we could have the beginnings of a joint draft by the time we get to UN GA. There are also a few other points we could negotiate on.

K wondered about the 3- and 12-mile limits. It (the 12-mile) gives them more miles to put their missiles. Smith are looking at the problem of the Law of the Sea conference. If we accept the 12 mile limit here before we have a clear understanding of the narrow ~~straits~~ straits. This would mean that Gibraltar would be blocked unless we had an understanding that certain narrow straits could be traversed. K said it could force a lot of people to commit themselves against it. Smith indicated that the Soviets in large part had accepted our Law of the Sea. If we and the Soviets could agree on the 12-mile limit and the narrow straits thing it would be good. I think we will have a politics problem if we can't go into UN GA with a concrete position.

K wondered how we could accept a 12-mile limit on this if we can't on the Law of the Sea. Smith said really we couldn't. In answer to K question, Smith said that Rogers would support him and will talk to Laird on it. Smith has prepared a talking paper for Rogers to submit to Laird. K said he was inclined to go along with Smith and asked if Smith would send him something on his thinking for his guidance. Smith said he would get it right out.