

World and Nation

Atmosphere favorable in wake of accord, but no breakthrough

MOSCOW (AP) — Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard A. Shevardnadze and U.S. Secretary of State George P. Shultz discussed human rights and regional conflicts Thursday but reached no breakthroughs despite a "constructive atmosphere" and less contention over Afghanistan.

Last week's signing of an accord setting a May 15 start for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan "certainly has been a positive development," State Department spokesman Charles Redman said.

He said the apparent improvement in the Afghanistan situation made that issue less contentious, but that the war and its consequences were not a "closed book." Questions of monitoring the pullout and helping Afghan refugees continue to confront U.S. and Soviet officials, he said.

Both Redman and Foreign Ministry spokesman Vadim Perfilev praised the mood at the talks between Shultz and Shevardnadze, who have been meeting monthly since February in preparation for the Moscow summit meeting that begins May 29.

Perfilev described the exchanges as being held in "a constructive atmosphere," and Redman said the ministers have made it their practice to get down to serious work on the issues that divide them.

"I would say that as always there is a good atmosphere at the talks," Redman said.

A U.S. official who spoke on condition of anonymity said the meetings had produced "a modicum of

Reagan concerned about treaty ratification

SPRINGFIELD, Mass. (AP) — President Reagan said Thursday he is "very concerned" that the Senate may not ratify the pending U.S.-Soviet arms control treaty before he goes to Moscow for summit talks with Soviet leader Mikhail S. Gorbachev.

In a question-and-answer session after a speech to the World Affairs Council of Western Massachusetts, Reagan was asked by a law student what the effect on the talks would be if the Senate had not yet ratified the treaty.

"I think it would be very upsetting and would put a strain on the summit if the Senate has not ratified the treaty by the time we go there," the president said.

"We hope and pray that they will, but their scheduling of it has been such that I am very concerned we may have to go without having had it ratified," he said.

Senate Majority Leader Robert C. Byrd, D-W.Va., said the Senate won't rush to ratify the treaty.

"We want a good treaty, that is our objective," Byrd said, telling reporters that the approach of the Moscow summit "doesn't guide me at all."

He added: "I'm not going to rush to judgment."

The pending treaty, covering intermediate and shorter-range missiles, was signed by Reagan and Gorbachev at their summit meeting in Washington in December.

When the two leaders meet again in Moscow May 29 to June 2, one of the issues confronting them will be a treaty still being negotiated that would cover longer-range intercontinental nuclear missiles.

Of this treaty, Reagan said, "There is a great question as to whether it could be ready for signature at the summit."

"We don't want a fast treaty," he said. "We want a good one."

On another issue, the president was asked about a trade bill being considered on Capitol Hill. Reagan said that if it reaches his desk in its present form, he will veto it.

He also said he would immediately ask Congress to enact a new bill that did not contain provisions to which the administration objects.

called at the time for another pact cutting strategic arms by 50 percent, but negotiations in Geneva have been proceeding slowly.

U.S. officials have said that problems in verifying compliance with the accord and a dispute over space-based defenses are holding up an agreement.

Redman told reporters at a briefing that as usual, Shultz began his talks with Shevardnadze on humanitarian issues, like the plight of Soviet Jews refused permission to emigrate and each side's contention that basic freedoms are infringed in the other country.

Gorbachev and Reagan signed an accord ridding both of their nations of medium- and shorter-range missiles at the December summit. They

progress" on several fronts.

He said arms control experts met in a working session while Shultz and Shevardnadze agreed on procedures for joint experiments in nuclear testing to begin in July, at both the U.S. test range in Nevada and at the Soviet facility in Semipalatinsk.

Soviet officials also introduced proposed new language outlining the Kremlin's stand on space-based weaponry, but U.S. negotiators were not immediately sure how to assess it pending translation.

"They were good, solid, business-like meetings," the official said, but he added, "I don't have anything of

a breakthrough to point to."

Shultz flew in from Helsinki, Finland, early in the day for what is expected to be his last working session in the Soviet capital before President Reagan's visit.

A meeting with Mikhail S. Gorbachev and discussions on arms control, including the dimming prospects for concluding a treaty halving strategic weapons stockpiles before the summit, were on Shultz's agenda for Friday.

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World Briefs

No smoking takes effect on flights

WASHINGTON (AP) — The federal ban on cigarette smoking on domestic flights of two hours or less — about 80 percent of the total — takes effect at 12:01 a.m. Saturday. Beforehand, some avid smokers are re-considering train travel while others search for ways to keep their tobacco urges under control, at least for a few hours.

Government and airline industry officials said Thursday they expect the new smoking restrictions to cause few problems, though some confusion may occur for the first few days.

"On the whole I think we're in reasonably good shape on this," Transportation Secretary Burnley said.

NASA completes test of new booster

BRIGHAM CITY, Utah (AP) — A full-scale firing of the redesigned space shuttle booster rocket Wednesday was cautiously hailed as a step toward America's resumption of manned space flights next August.

But Morton Thiokol and NASA officials said it will take a week to 10 days to verify that the two-minute test, the first of three

final tests required before the launch, was a complete success.

The test was the first full-scale firing in which deliberate cracks were introduced in critical seals, one of which failed and caused the destruction of shuttle Challenger 27 months ago.

FCC fines two dial-a-porn operations

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Federal Communications Commission on Thursday ordered two California dial-a-porn operators to pay fines totaling \$1.2 million for failing to restrict access of obscene messages to children and non-consenting adults.

"It's time we took steps," said FCC Commissioner James H. Quello. "The ultimate in sleaze deserves the ultimate . . . penalty."

The companies, Audio Prizes, Inc., and Intertel Inc., were each fined \$600,000 for violation of statutes banning the interstate transmission of obscene material and failing to restrict such transmissions to minors and non-consenting adults.

An FCC spokesman, George Brock, said the \$600,000 were based on the amount of money the companies made during the commission's investigation.

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