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CONFIDENTIAL

Prime Minister

GRS 290

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FM THE HAGUE 311640Z MAY 79

TO PRIORITY FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 137 OF 31 MAY

INFO ROUTINE MODUK, ALL NATO POSTS, UKDEL VIENNA,
INFO SAVING MOSCOW

2 files. SW 1/6

MY TELNO 132: NATO MINISTERIAL MEETING: THEATRE NUCLEAR FORCES (TNF)

1. IN RESTRICTED SESSION, VANCE (US) SAID THERE WAS AN URGENT NEED FOR CLOSE CONSULTATION BETWEEN THE ALLIES SO THAT THE ALLIANCE COULD WORK OUT ITS POSITION BEFORE SALT 3 NEGOTIATIONS BEGAN. IN SALT 3 THE SOVIET UNION WOULD CERTAINLY RAISE THE QUESTION OF FORWARD BASED SYSTEMS (FBS). THE ALLIANCE SHOULD THEREFORE PURSUE URGENTLY THE WORK OF THE HIGH LEVEL AND SPECIAL GROUPS (HLG AND SG) IN ORDER TO REACH A POSITION BEFORE THE END OF THIS YEAR.
2. FRANCOIS-PONCET (FRANCE) SAID THAT FOR FRANCE LONG RANGE THEATRE SYSTEMS WERE IDENTICAL TO CENTRAL STRATEGIC SYSTEMS. THE FRENCH THEREFORE COULD NOT TAKE PART IN THE WORK OF THE HLG OR SG. BUT THE FRENCH WOULD MAINTAIN THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THEIR NUCLEAR FORCES.
3. GENSCHER (FRG) SAID THE GERMANS WERE CONVINCED THAT TNF MODERNISATION WAS INDISPENSIBLE ON POLITICAL AND MILITARY GROUNDS. THE REASONS FOR THIS WERE THE GROWING OBSOLESCENCE OF EXISTING WESTERN EQUIPMENT, THE DEPLOYMENT OF THE SS20 AND BACKFIRE, AND THE FACT THAT AFTER SALT 2 THE QUOTE EURO-STRATEGIC BALANCE UNQUOTE WOULD HAVE A NEW DIMENSION. FURTHERMORE, IF THE ALLIANCE FAILED TO TAKE THE NECESSARY DECISIONS THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECT WOULD BE DISASTROUS. THEY SHOULD AGREE ON A TNF PROGRAMME AND OFFER TO NEGOTIATE ON THAT BASIS. IT WAS WRONG TO THINK THAT ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS COULD REMOVE THE NEED FOR MODERNISATION. THE WORK OF THE HLG AND SG SHOULD BE KEPT IN STEP. DECISIONS MUST BE REACHED IN 1979. THE

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/ LEADING ROLE

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LEADING ROLE PLAYED BY THE US COULD NOT REPLACE THE ACT OF WILL
REQUIRED FROM THE EUROPEANS. PROGRESS IN ARMS CONTROL DEPENDED
UPON LEAVING THE WARSAW PACT IN NO DOUBT OF OUR READINESS TO
MAKE THE NECESSARY EFFORT ON TNF. THE ALLIANCE HAD A SINGLE INTEREST
IN TNF. DIVERSIFICATION OF VIEWS WOULD ONLY LEAD TO DIVISIONS
WITHIN THE ALLIANCE.

4. SEE MIFT.

FCO PLEASE PASS TO SAVING ADDRESSEE

HERVEY

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TO PRIORITY FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 138 OF 31 MAY

INFO ROUTINE MODUK, ALL NATO POSTS, UKDEL VIENNA,,
INFO SAVING MOSCOW

MIPT: NATO MINISTERIAL MEETING: THEATRE NUCLEAR FORCES (TNF)

1. YOU SAID THAT HMG HAD MADE CLEAR THAT THEY WOULD MAINTAIN EFFECTIVENESS OF THE UK DETERRENT. WE WERE STUDYING URGENTLY WHAT WE COULD CONTRIBUTE TO A NATO PROGRAMME OF TNF MODERNISATION. THE QUESTIONS OF BASING AND PRESENTATION CREATED POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES FOR MANY COUNTRIES. BUT TIME WAS SHORT IF DECISIONS WERE TO BE REACHED BY THE END OF 1979. THE PROBLEMS RAISED BY SALT 3, TNF MODERNISATION AND THE WORK OF THE SPECIAL GROUP COULD NOT BE TREATED IN ISOLATION FROM EACH OTHER. THE ARMS CONTROL ISSUES SHOULD BE EXAMINED QUICKLY AND THE ALLIANCE SHOULD WORK OUT THE FEASIBILITY OF NEGOTIATING LIMITATIONS ON SOVIET SYSTEMS OF THIS KIND.

2. THE ALLIANCE NEEDED A COHERENT ARMS CONTROL POLICY WHEN IT CAME TO TAKE DECISIONS ON TNF MODERNISATION AND PRESENT THEM TO THE PUBLIC. EQUALLY, ARMS CONTROL WOULD BE INADEQUATE IF THE ALLIANCE HAD NOT DEMONSTRATED ITS RESOLVE TO MAINTAIN ADEQUATE THEATRE NUCLEAR FORCES. EXPERIENCE SHOWED THAT THE RUSSIANS WOULD NEGOTIATE SERIOUSLY ONLY IF THERE WAS EVIDENCE OF REAL DETERMINATION IN THE ALLIANCE. THIS SUGGESTED THAT NATO SHOULD DECIDE ON A MODERNISATION PROGRAMME AND HOW TO ACHIEVE IT BEFORE ATTEMPTING TO BARGAIN ABOUT LIMITATIONS. MEANWHILE IT WAS IMPORTANT FOR WORK ON MODERNISATION AND ON ARMS CONTROL TO PROCEED HAND IN HAND.

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/ 3. YOU POINTED

3. YOU POINTED OUT THAT ALL NATO COUNTRIES HAD SPECIAL DOMESTIC POLITICAL PROBLEMS. BUT IF THE ALLIANCE DID NOT TAKE THE NECESSARY DECISIONS THIS YEAR, IT WOULD FIND IT MUCH MORE DIFFICULT TO DO SO LATER. THE ABSENCE OF DECISIONS WOULD MOREOVER CALL INTO QUESTION NATO'S RESOLUTION. THE PRESENT MEETING SHOULD INSTILL A SENSE OF URGENCY INTO FURTHER DISCUSSIONS IN THE ALLIANCE ON THESE MATTERS.

4. SEE MIFT.

FCO PLEASE PASS TO SAVING ADDRESSEE

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