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TELEGRAM NUMBER 1417 OF 7 MAY

INFO BONN

INFO SAVING PARIS, UKDEL NATO, ROME AND MOSCOW.

MS.

BONN TELNO 332: EUROPE/USA RELATIONS.

1. BEFORE LISTING SOME OF THE PARTICULAR ISSUES IN RELATIONS BETWEEN EUROPE AND THE UNITED STATES THAT COULD ARISE IN THE CHEQUERS MEETING WITH CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT, I SHOULD LEAVE YOU IN NO DOUBT THAT CONFUSION REIGNS HERE IN THE REALM OF DECISION-MAKING. HAIG HAS NOT SUCCEEDED IN BECOMING THE VICAR-GENERAL OF FOREIGN POLICY; AND GIVEN HUMAN NATURE AND THE NATURE OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT, IT WOULD SCARCELY HAVE BEEN IMAGINABLE THAT HE COULD HAVE DONE SO. AS A RESULT OF WHITE HOUSE CRITICISM OF HIS PERFORMANCE, HIS STOCK WITHIN THE ADMINISTRATION AND IN PUBLIC HAD SUNK PRETTY LOW PRIOR TO THE ROME MEETING. BUT THIS PRODUCED A REACTION ESPECIALLY IN THE PRESS IN HIS FAVOUR LAST WEEK, AND THE PRESIDENT (AND HIS CLOSEST ADVISERS) EVIDENTLY DECIDED THAT THE MOMENT HAD COME TO SHOW SUPPORT. THE PRESIDENT SPOKE YESTERDAY OF HAIG'S "TRIUMPHAL RETURN" FROM THE ROME MEETING FOR ALL THE WORLD AS THOUGH HE WERE A GENERAL COME HOME AFTER SOME GREAT MILITARY VICTORY. IT IS WITH HIM AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT THAT WE DEAL, AND, THOUGH THE ROLE OF THE WHITE HOUSE IN FOREIGN POLICY MUST NOT BE UNDERESTIMATED, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE AT THIS STAGE OF THE NEW U.S. GOVERNMENT TO SEE HOW CONTACTS BETWEEN FOREIGN REPRESENTATIVES AND THE WHITE HOUSE TEAM ARE GOING TO DEVELOP.

2. YOU WILL HAVE FORMED YOUR OWN OPINION OF HAIG IN HIS ROLE AS SECRETARY OF STATE. MY OWN IMPRESSION IS THAT HIS STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES ARE QUICKLY BECOMING APPARENT. HE HAS, OF COURSE, A FIRM CHARACTER AND CAN SPEAK WITH FLUENCY AND AUTHORITY. THE AMERICANS ARE LESS BAFFLED BY HAIGSPEAKE THAN OTHER PEOPLE. BUT HE DOES NOT SEE FOREIGN POLICY IN THE ROUND OR IN CONCEPTUAL TERMS AND I DO NOT FIND HIM BRIMMING OVER WITH IMAGINATION. HE DEALS WITH IMMEDIATE PROBLEMS VERY PRACTICALLY, BUT NEITHER HE NOR ANYONE ELSE IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT IS LOOKING VERY FAR AHEAD OR FITTING EACH PIECE OF THE JIGSAW INTO THE WHOLE PICTURE. I CONFESS TO HAVING A SLIGHT RESERVATION ABOUT HIS HEALTH. HE IS SMOKING AGAIN AND DOING SO MUCH TOO MUCH FOR A MAN WHO HAS HAD A SERIOUS HEART OPERATION: AND THERE ARE TIMES WHEN HE DOES NOT SEEM ALTOGETHER AT EASE IN HIS SKIN. IN PERSONAL DEALINGS HE CAN TEND TO APPEAR RATHER MILITARY AND ABRASIVE WITH HIS COMPATRIOTS, BUT THEN HE PERCEIVES THE WASHINGTON WORLD AS IT WAS IN NIXON'S DAY, WHEN THE LAW OF THE JUNGLE PREVAILED; AND ALTHOUGH I AM SURE THAT HE LEARNT A LOT FROM KISSINGER AND THOUGH HE MUST COME NEAR TO HAVING KISSINGER'S AMBITION, HE DOES NOT HAVE HIS BYZANTINE SUBTLETY OR TALENT FOR DISPOSING OF OR EVADING OPPONENTS.

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3. WITH FOREIGNERS HE APPEARS THE OPPOSITE, HE IS GIFTED IN SAYING JUST THE RIGHT THING TO APPEAL TO EACH OF THEM AND MANAGES TO LEAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT HE IS ON THEIR SIDE. THIS MOST UNPALMESTONIAN TRAIT OF APPEARING PLACATORY ABROAD AND COMBATIVE AT HOME CAN BE A LITTLE CONFUSING AND I THINK THERE IS A DANGER THAT HIS VERY CONCILIATORINESS COULD, PARTICULARLY IN THE ABSENCE OF CLEAR-CUT POLICY DECISIONS, LEAD TO DISAPPOINTMENT.

4. NOR IS HAIG LIKELY TO BE ABLE TO GET HIS WAY UNFAILINGLY OR EASILY WITH A DIVIDED CONGRESS: HE MAY HAVE TO DEPEND UPON WHITE HOUSE INTERVENTION TO GET HIS POLICIES ACCEPTED THERE. NOT THAT THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE IS LOOKING IMPRESSIVE: UNDER THE WEAK AND VERBOSE CHAIRMANSHIP OF PERCY, IT COMPRISES MANY NEW AND INEXPERIENCED SENATORS WHO ONLY KNOW ONE THING: THE COMMITTEE'S CONSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY FOR OBSTRUCTION.

5. NONE OF THIS IS GOING TO MAKE THE NEW U.S. GOVERNMENT'S PROMISE OF READY CONSULTATION WITH THE ALLIES ANY EASIER TO FULFIL. THERE CAN BE NO QUESTIONING HAIG'S GOODWILL TOWARDS EUROPE AND I DO NOT THINK THAT HE WILL BEND IN THE WIND ON THIS. BUT THE SHEER DIFFICULTY OF COMING TO A CONSENSUS IN THE ADMINISTRATION IS GOING TO MAKE ADVANCE CONSULTATION THAT MUCH THE MORE DIFFICULT, PARTICULARLY GIVEN FEARS OF LEAKS.

6. I AM SURE THAT WE MUST TAKE ACCOUNT OF WEINBERGER'S PRACTICE OF EXPRESSING HIS OWN VIEWS ON CONTROVERSIAL DEFENCE MATTERS, EVEN THOUGH THEY IMPINGE ON FOREIGN POLICY, WITHOUT CLEARING HIS LINES WITH HAIG. THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE WILL CERTAINLY HAVE VIEWS THAT ARE AT VARIANCE WITH THOSE OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT, EG ON SALT AND TNF. THIS INDEPENDENCE OF THE PENTAGON MUST BE BORNE IN MIND IN THE CONTEXT BOTH OF CONFUSED DECISION-MAKING AND THE PROBLEMS OF CONSULTATIONS WITH ALLIES.

7. ONE FINAL POINT ON THE BACKGROUND TO THE FORMULATION OF U.S. FOREIGN POLICY IS THE MOOD OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY ON MANY POLICIES EG ON EAST/WEST RELATIONS, HUMAN RIGHTS, AFRICA, ETC, THEIR CONTROL OF THE SENATE, AND THE PREDILECTIONS OF THE PRESIDENT HIMSELF. THESE MAY WELL BE AT VARIANCE WITH THE ANALYSES AND PROPOSALS OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT.

8. PLEASE SEE MIFT.

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HENDERSON

REPEATED AS REQUESTED

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