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GRS 484

SECRET

FM FCO 191215Z SEPT 79

TO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON

TELEGRAM NUMBER 1227 OF 19 SEPTEMBER.

AND TO MODUK (DS 17)

INFO MOSCOW, UKMIS GENEVA (FOR CTB DEL)

YOUR TELNO 2721: COMPREHENSIVE TEST BAN (CTB) NEGOTIATIONS:  
NATIONAL SEISMIC STATIONS (NSS) ON UK TERRITORY

1. MINISTERS HAVE DECIDED THAT AFTER THE NEGOTIATIONS RESUME ON 24 SEPTEMBER, THE UK DELEGATION SHOULD CONFIRM THE PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT'S OFFER OF ONE NSS IN THE UK ITSELF.
2. PLEASE INFORM THE AMERICANS AT THE HIGHEST APPROPRIATE LEVEL AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. YOU SHOULD MAKE THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

- (A) MINISTERS HAVE GIVEN THE PROBLEM OF NSS ON UK TERRITORY CAREFUL CONSIDERATION, BEARING IN MIND THE IMPORTANCE OF SECURING 10 NSS ON SOVIET TERRITORY AND THE VIEWS OF THE AMERICANS:
- (B) BUT THEY REMAIN CONVINCED THAT THE SOVIET REQUEST FOR 10 NSS ON UK TERRITORY IS UNREALISTIC AND CANNOT BE JUSTIFIED TECHNICALLY, FOR THE REASONS SET OUT EARLIER THIS YEAR BY OUR DELEGATION. NOR WOULD ACCEPTANCE OF DEMONSTRABLY UNNECESSARY NSS IN SCATTERED ISLAND DEPENDENCIES TO SATISFY THE RUSSIANS BE UNDERSTOOD BY BRITISH PARLIAMENTARY OR PUBLIC OPINION:
- (C) OUR DELEGATION IS THEREFORE BEING INSTRUCTED TO CONFIRM THE PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT'S OFFER OF ONE NSS AT ESKDALEMUIR IN SCOTLAND:
- (D) IF WE FAIL TO PERSUADE THE RUSSIANS TO ACCEPT OUR RENEWED OFFER OF ONE NSS, THE MOST PROBABLE ALTERNATIVE IS FOR THE UK TO WITHDRAW FROM THE SEPARATE VERIFICATION AGREEMENT BUT WE HOPE IT WILL NOT COME TO THAT AND MINISTERS WILL WISH TO CONSIDER THE POSITION BEFORE SVA WITHDRAWAL IS PUT TO THE RUSSIANS.



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3. WE REALISE THE US ADMINISTRATION'S PREFERENCE WOULD BE AN INCREASED UK OFFER OF NSS AS REITERATED BY BARTHOLOMEW ON 17 SEPTEMBER. BUT YOU SHOULD SAY THAT WE VERY MUCH HOPE WE CAN COUNT ON THEIR SUPPORT. THIS WILL GREATLY IMPROVE THE PROSPECT OF SECURING RUSSIAN ACCEPTANCE OF THE FACT THAT THIS IS AS FAR AS WE CAN GO, OR AT LEAST INDUCING THEM TO NEGOTIATE ON OTHER ISSUES. WE WANT TO PUT OUR POSITION TO THE RUSSIANS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, BUT THE AMERICANS WILL NO DOUBT WISH TO DISCUSS WITH US HOW THIS SHOULD BE DONE.

4. YOU SHOULD STRESS OUR CONTINUING INTEREST IN ACHIEVING AN EARLY AND SATISFACTORY CTB. AT THE SAME TIME WE ARE NOT CONVINCED THAT NSS IN UK DEPENDENT TERRITORIES ARE A DECISIVE ELEMENT IN THE WHOLE SOVIET ATTITUDE TO A CTB TREATY, NOR THAT ACCEPTING MORE NSS WOULD LEAD TO EARLY PROGRESS ON OTHER OUTSTANDING ISSUES. THE RUSSIANS MAY HAVE BEEN PARTLY USING THE NSS ISSUE TO STALL THE NEGOTIATIONS UNTIL THEY SEE WHAT HAPPENS TO SALT II. IT WOULD THEREFORE BE VERY USEFUL TO HAVE A FULLER ACCOUNT THAN BARTHOLOMEW GAVE ON 17 SEPTEMBER OF LATEST US THINKING ABOUT THE PROSPECTS FOR ACHIEVING A CTB TREATY ON THE PRESENT BASIS.

5. WE SHALL BE INFORMING YORK AND OTHERS WHEN THEY CALL AT THE FCO ON THE AFTERNOON OF 20 SEPTEMBER.

CARRINGTON

FILES

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