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FM WASHINGTON 082309Z MAY 85

TO ROUTINE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 1517 OF 8 MAY

INFO BONN PARIS UKDEL NATO MOSCOW MODUK (FOR DACU)

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SALT II INTERIM RESTRAINTS

1. IN TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE ON 7 MAY, PERLE GAVE IT AS HIS PERSONAL VIEW THAT THE US SHOULD NOT CONTINUE TO OBSERVE SALT II BEYOND ITS EXPIRATION DATE ON 31 DECEMBER. PERLE ARGUED THAT, IF SALT II LIMITS REMAINED IN EFFECT AFTER THE END OF THE YEAR, THE US WOULD HAVE TO RETIRE A SIGNIFICANTLY LARGER NUMBER OF NUCLEAR SYSTEMS THAN WOULD THE SOVIET UNION OVER THE NEXT 2-3 YEARS AS MODERNISATION PROGRAMMES PROCEEDED. PERLE ALSO SAID THAT HE DID NOT EXPECT THAT SOVIET NUCLEAR FORCES WOULD GROW ANY FASTER WITHOUT SALT II THAN WITH SALT II, AND THAT CONTINUED US OBSERVANCE OF SALT II AFTER 1985 WOULD AMOUNT TO ABANDONING COMPLIANCE COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE SOVIET UNION WITHOUT SECURING ANY CORRECTIVE SOVIET ACTION. PERLE ADDED THAT QUOTE IF THE SENATE IS TO CONSERVE ITS CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY TO RATIFY TREATIES, THEN IT WOULD BE UNWISE TO PERMIT THE DE FACTO CONSTRUCTION OF TREATIES IN THE ABSENCE OF RATIFICATION UNQUOTE.

2. ON COMPLIANCE, PERLE ALSO FLOATED (FOR THE SECOND TIME) HIS IDEA OF CREATING A DOLLARS 5 BILLION PENTAGON TRUST FUND OF APPROPRIATED FUNDS WHICH WOULD NOT BE DRAWN DOWN BY THE ADMINISTRATION UNLESS THE SOVIET UNION FURTHER VIOLATED ARMS CONTROL AGREEMENTS, WHEN IT WOULD BE USED TO FUND FURTHER US WEAPONS PROCUREMENT. THE AIM WOULD BE TO CREATE A DISINCENTIVE TO SOVIET CHEATING. ON THIS TOO PERLE DOES NOT PURPORT TO EXPRESS AN AGREED ADMINISTRATION VIEW.

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/comment

SALT, Arms Control

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COMMENT

3. THE DEBATE IS NOW HOTTING UP ON WHETHER THE ADMINISTRATION SHOULD CONTINUE TO OBSERVE THE SALT II LIMITS AFTER DECEMBER, AND ON THE PRIOR QUESTION OF WHETHER TO CONTINUE TO RESPECT THEM WHEN THE TRIDENT SUBMARINE ALASKA THIS YEAR BEGINS SEA TRIALS, THEREBY REQUIRING (UNDER SALT II) THE DISMANTLING OF AN EQUIVALENT NUMBER OF AN EARLIER SYSTEM. PERLE STRONGLY OPPOSES SUCH DISMANTLING. HIS VIEWS ARE WELL KNOWN: BUT ARE VERY MUCH AT ONE END OF THE ADMINISTRATION SPECTRUM. OTHERS (EG NITZE: SEE KERR'S LETTER OF 6 MAY TO WESTON) TEND TO FAVOUR CONTINUING TO OBSERVE THE SALT II LIMITS, AND BELIEVE THAT THIS WILL BE POLITICALLY POSSIBLE. IT SEEMS UNLIKELY THAT THERE WILL BE AN EARLY PRESIDENTIAL DECISION ONE WAY OR THE OTHER: PERLE PRIVATELY ADMITS THAT THE ALASKA DECISION CAN BE POSTPONED WITHOUT DIFFICULTY, LEAVING THE REAL DECISION DEADLINE AS DECEMBER.

WRIGHT

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