

SECRET

FM WASHINGTON 122340Z JUL 85

TO PRIORITY FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 2110 OF 12 JUL

AND TO MODUK (FOR DACU), UKDEL NATO

ROUTINE MOSCOW, PARIS, BONN

US/SOVIET GENEVA TALKS: START

SUMMARY

1. SOVIET NEGOTIATORS HAVE NOW PUT FORWARD A VERSION OF THE 25 PCNT REDUCTIONS PROPOSAL.

DETAIL

2. SOURCES IN POL-MIL (PLEASE PROTECT) TOLD US ON 10 AND 11 JULY THAT, DURING AN INFORMAL SESSION OF THE START GROUP IN LATE JUNE, THE RUSSIANS PUT FORWARD A SUGGESTION FOR MUTUAL REDUCTIONS OF 25 PCNT IN THE NUMBERS OF BOTH STRATEGIC NUCLEAR DELIVERY VEHICLES AND WEAPONS (IE WARHEADS, HOWEVER DELIVERED). THEY ALSO SUGGESTED THAT EQUAL PERCENTAGE SUBLIMITS (NUMBERS UNSPECIFIED) MIGHT BE DEvised TO CAP NUMBERS OF PARTICULAR TYPES (AGAIN UNSPECIFIED) OF DELIVERY SYSTEMS. IN A PLENARY SESSION EARLY THIS MONTH, THE SOVIET TEAM APPARENTLY TOUCHED ON THE IDEA AGAIN.
3. OUR SOURCES REGARD THIS MOVE AS SIGNIFICANT IN TWO RESPECTS. FIRST, IT REPRESENTS A SHIFT FROM THE IMMOBILITY OF ROUND 1 AND THE FIRST HALF OF ROUND 2 (PARA 5 OF UKDEL NATO TELNO 169). SECONDLY, THE CONFIRMATION THAT THE GORBACHEV 25 PCNT REDUCTIONS OFFER WOULD APPLY TO WARHEADS AS WELL AS TO SNDVS MAKES IT MUCH MORE INTERESTING. US NEGOTIATORS HAVE BEEN INSTRUCTED TO PROBE FURTHER, AND TO TRY TO OBTAIN MORE DETAIL: BUT HAVE APPARENTLY NOT AS YET MADE PROGRESS
4. STATE DO NOT WANT NEWS OF THIS MOVE TO GET ABOUT JUST YET. IN COMMENTING ON STATEMENTS BY REPRESENTATIVE SOLARZ THAT CHERVOV TOLD HIM IN MOSCOW ON 3 JULY THAT THE 25 PCNT REDUCTIONS OFFER APPLIED TO WARHEADS AS WELL AS SNDVS, OFFICIALS HERE HAVE SAID ONLY THAT THE SOVIET SIDE HAVE NOT YET MADE A FORMAL PRESENTATION ON THE GORBACHEV OFFER. THIS IS CLEARLY TRUE, BUT NOT THE WHOLE TRUTH.
5. IT IS NOT YET CLEAR WHETHER, AND IN WHAT TERMS, THIS DEVELOPMENT WILL BE DESCRIBED IN NEXT WEEK'S NAC BRIEFING. THE CONCERN IN STATE IS THAT ITS SIGNIFICANCE COULD BE EXAGGERATED BY SOME: WE HAVE OF COURSE DRAWN ATTENTION TO THE RISK THAT ITS OMISSION WOULD SURPRISE THE ALLIES IF AND WHEN THE RUSSIANS SUBSEQUENTLY PLAY IT UP, A LA CHERVOV. BUT IT WILL CLEARLY BE IMPORTANT THAT UK REPRESENTATIVES SHOULD NOT NEXT WEEK REVEAL FOREKNOWLEDGE.

WRIGHT

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