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TO IMMEDIATE FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

TELEGRAM NUMBER 297 OF 4 DECEMBER 1979

INFO IMMEDIATE MODUK (FOR DUS(P) AND DS17)

INFO PRIORITY WASHINGTON AND BONN

TNF MODERNISATION

1. SO FAR WE HAVE RESOLUTELY SET OURSELVES AGAINST CONSIDERING ANY CONCESSIONS ON THE SUBSTANCE OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS ON MODERNISATION IN THE INTEGRATED DECISION DOCUMENT (IDD) IN ORDER TO ACCOMMODATE THE DUTCH OR OTHER WAVERERS. THIS IS PARTLY BECAUSE WE BELIEVE THEIR RECOMMENDATIONS REPRESENT THE MINIMUM NEEDED TO MEET THE MILITARY REQUIREMENTS AND PARTLY IN THE HOPE THAT IF WE STAND FIRM THE DUTCH WILL COME UP TO SCRATCH ON THE DAY. WE HAVE ALSO BEEN STRONGLY INFLUENCED BY THE NEED TO SUPPORT THE AMERICANS IN THEIR INSISTENCE ON MAINTAINING THE PROGRAMME INTACT.

2. I STILL HOPE THIS MAY BE POSSIBLE AND THAT WE SHALL BE ABLE TO PRODUCE AN ALLIANCE CONCENSUS ON 12 DECEMBER FOR ACCEPTANCE OF THE IDD AS IT STANDS. BUT THE SITUATION LOOKS LESS PROMISING NOW THAN IT DID BEFORE THE DANISH VOLTE-FACE. THIS IS NOT A REASON FOR WATERING DOWN THE IDD IN ADVANCE OF 12 DECEMBER. THERE COULD BE NO CERTAINTY THAT ANY CHANGES WE MADE WOULD BUY A CONSENSUS AND IN ANY CASE NEITHER THE AMERICANS NOR THE GERMANS WOULD AGREE TO SUCH A COURSE EVEN IF WE WISHED TO PROMOTE IT. BUT WE SHALL NEED TO BE CLEAR IN OUR MINDS ABOUT THE LINE WE SHOULD TAKE ON 12 DECEMBER IF, AS NOW BEGINS TO SEEM POSSIBLE, UNANIMOUS SUPPORT FOR THE IDD IS NOT FORTHCOMING. THREE POSSIBLE COURSES ARE DISCUSSED IN THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS.

THE HARD CORE OPTION

3. WE COULD GO AHEAD WITH MODERNISATION PLANS UNCHANGED WITH SUPPORT FROM AS MANY COUNTRIES AS POSSIBLE. GIVEN THE GERMAN CONDITION, WE MUST ASSUME THE MINIMUM WOULD BE THE UNITED STATES, UNITED KINGDOM, GERMANY AND ITALY. ON THE BEST ASSUMPTION,

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IF BELGIUM JOINED WE MIGHT EXPECT THAT PORTUGAL, TURKEY, GREECE AND CANADA WOULD TOO. BUT IF THE NORWEGIANS ALLOWED THEMSELVES TO BE INFLUENCED BY THE DANES, WE MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO RELY ON THE LAST THREE. THIS WOULD BE THE WORST CASE, WHICH HOWEVER CANNOT BE ENTIRELY RULED OUT. IF IT MATERIALISED, THE HARD CORE OPTION WOULD INVOLVE A MAJOR SPLIT IN THE ALLIANCE AT A TIME WHEN WE SHALL NEED MAXIMUM COHESION AGAINST A MOUNTING SOVIET CAMPAIGN OF PROPAGANDA AND PRESSURE. WE MAY HAVE TO FACE THIS RISK, BUT, IN VIEW OF THE POTENTIALLY SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES, I SUGGEST WE OUGHT TO LOOK AT THE ALTERNATIVES.

MODIFIED IDD.

4. IF THE DUTCH WERE ABLE TO JOIN THE CONSENSUS, PROBABLY ONLY THE DANES WOULD STAY OUT. IT IS NOT IMPOSSIBLE THAT, IF THEY FOUND THEMSELVES TOTALLY ISOLATED, EVEN THE DANES WOULD IN THE END SUMMON UP ENOUGH COURAGE TO COME IN. IN THIS SENSE, THEREFORE, THE DUTCH ARE THE KEY. THERE IS PROBABLY NOTHING MORE WE CAN OR SHOULD TRY TO DO NOW TO SUGAR THE PILL FOR THEM BEFORE THEY TAKE THEIR DECISION (LIKELY TO BE ON 7 DECEMBER). THE QUESTION IS WHETHER WE COULD AFFORD TO MEET ANY OF THE CONDITIONS THEY MAY BRING TO THE MEETING ON 12 DECEMBER. WE COULD NOT ACCEPT THE PROPOSAL TO SEPARATE THE DECISIONS ON PRODUCTION AND DEPLOYMENT. THIS WAS MADE QUITE CLEAR TO THE DUTCH AT THE PERMREPS' MEETING ON 28 NOVEMBER (MY TELEGRAM NO 290), MOST FORCIBLY BY AARON. BUT WE MIGHT CONSIDER WHETHER THERE IS ANY WAY IN WHICH WE COULD HELP THE DUTCH ON NUMBERS. I SUGGEST THREE POSSIBILITIES:-

- (I) IN RETURN FOR DUTCH SUPPORT FOR PRODUCTION AND DEPLOYMENT OF THE FULL PROGRAMME OF 572, WE COULD AGREE TO HOLD IN SUSPENSE THE LOCATION OF THE 48 MISSILES AT PRESENT ALLOCATED TO THE NETHERLANDS ON THE UNDER-STANDING THAT A FINAL DECISION ON THEIR BASING WOULD BE TAKEN LATER.
- (II) IN RETURN FOR DUTCH COMMITMENT TO AN EVENTUAL TOTAL PROGRAMME OF 572, WE MIGHT TAKE A FIRM DECISION NOW ON DEPLOYMENT OF ONLY 400, THE REMAINDER TO BE DECIDED ON IN TWO YEARS' TIME IN THE LIGHT OF PROGRESS ON TNF ARMS CONTROL (CF PARA 2B OF THE HAGUE TELNO 383).
- (III) ALTHOUGH THE MILITARY AUTHORITIES HAVE ACCEPTED 572 AS THE BEST THEY CAN HOPE FOR AND THIS FIGURE HAS BEEN PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE FOR SEVERAL WEEKS AS A RESULT OF A (POSSIBLY DELIBERATE) LEAK IN WASHINGTON, WE WERE CAREFUL TO AVOID COMMITMENT TO A DEFINITE FIGURE IN THE NPG COMMUNIQUE. IF

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THE DUTCH ON 12 DECEMBER SAID THEY COULD GO ALONG WITH A TOTAL PROGRAMME OF NO MORE THAN 400, WE SHOULD NEED TO BE IN A POSITION TO SAY WHETHER THIS WOULD BE A PRICE WORTH PAYING FOR AN ALLIANCE CONSENSUS: PERHAPS COMBINED WITH A REFERENCE TO A POSSIBILITY OF UPWARD AS WELL AS DOWNWARD ADJUSTMENT IN THE LIGHT OF PROGRESS IN ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS.

IN SUGGESTING THESE POSSIBILITIES I AM CONSCIOUS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF NOT PROVOKING A GENERAL UNRAVELLING. BUT WE SHOULD NEED TO BALANCE THE ADVANTAGE OF HAVING THE DUTCH IN AN ALLIANCE CONSENSUS AGAINST THE POSSIBILITY OF A SPLIT IN THE ALLIANCE IF WE CAN FIND NO WAY OF ACCOMODATING THEM. IF WE WERE ABLE TO MEET THE DUTCH ON NUMBERS, I DO NOT BELIEVE THEIR OTHER POSSIBLE CONDITIONS, EG, AN UNDERTAKING TO CONSIDER REDUCING DUTCH NUCLEAR TASKS, NEED BE INSUPERABLE.

POSTPONEMENT OF DECISIONS.

5. IF WE WANTED TO BE SURE OF THE DANES WE SHOULD HAVE TO BE READY TO MEET THEIR VIEWS ON TIMING. BUT THIS WOULD BE TOO HIGH A PRICE TO PAY. IN ANY CASE THE DANISH PROPOSAL TO ASK FOR A FREEZE ON SOVIET SS-20 DEPLOYMENT IS SO FULL OF PITFALLS AS TO MAKE IT UNWORKABLE. SO IF THE DANES STICK TO THEIR PRESENT LINE, I SEE NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO GO AHEAD WITHOUT THEM. IF HOWEVER WE CAN KEEP THE DUTCH ON BOARD, THEY SEEM LIKELY TO BE THE ONLY DEFECTORS.

6. THE OTHER DUTCH PROBLEM CONCERNS OPTION III AND THE MBFR PROPOSALS (SEE MY TELEGRAM NO 292). I AM HOPEFUL THAT THIS MAY BE RESOLVED AT MINISTERIAL LEVEL. BUT I BELIEVE WE SHALL HAVE TO UNDERTAKE TO STUDY WITHIN THE ALLIANCE THE POSSIBILITY OF INCLUDING NUCLEAR AS WELL AS OTHER ARMAMENTS IN PHASE II. THE AMERICANS MAY BE RESISTANT, EVEN THOUGH IT WOULD INVOLVE NO COMMITMENT. BUT I HOPE WE CAN PRESS THEM TO AGREE. THE DUTCH WILL ALSO WANT TO TELL THEIR PARLIAMENT THAT THIS STUDY IS BEING MADE. I DOUBT WHETHER THE ALLIANCE, ESPECIALLY THE AMERICANS, COULD AGREE TO THIS, BUT WE NEED NOT PERHAPS BE TOO REPROACHFUL IF, IN THE COURSE OF THE DUTCH PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE ON THE NATO TNF DECISIONS, IT WERE TO BE REVEALED.

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