

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

FM WASHINGTON

TO PRIORITY FCO

TELNO 03

OF 022300Z JANUARY 86

AND TO INFO PRIORITY MOSCOW, BONN, PARIS, UKDEL NATO

MY TELNO 3414: FUTURE US/SOVIET MEETINGS

1. QUOTING STATE DEPARTMENT AND WHITE HOUSE SOURCES, THE US PRESS ON 1 JANUARY REPORTED THAT DOBRYNIN HAD SUGGESTED INFORMALLY TO THE ADMINISTRATION THAT THE NEXT US/SOVIET SUMMIT MIGHT BEST BE HELD NOT IN JUNE BUT IN SEPTEMBER. JUNE MIGHT BE TOO SOON TO PERMIT SUBSTANTIVE PROGRESS ON KEY ISSUES, ESPECIALLY ARMS CONTROL. THE REPORTS NOTED IF THE SUMMIT WERE POSTPONED UNTIL SEPTEMBER, THE FIRST SHULTZ/SHEVARDNADZE PREPARATORY MEETING WOULD PROBABLY BE SIMILARLY POSTPONED UNTIL THE SPRING.

2. IN COMMENTING PUBLICLY, ADMINISTRATION SPOKESMEN HAVE CONFINED THEMSELVES TO SAYING THAT DATES FOR THE NEXT SUMMIT ARE THE SUBJECT OF CONTINUING DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSION. BUT PALMER (EUR/STATE) HAS CONFIRMED TO US THAT THE REPORTS OF DOBRYNIN'S DEMARCHE ARE CORRECT (THOUGH IT WAS NOT CLEAR WHETHER HE HAD FIRM INSTRUCTIONS CLEARED AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL, AND THEREFORE WHETHER IT REPRESENTED THE OFFICIAL RESPONSE TO THE US PROPOSAL OF JUNE). AND, AS RIDGEWAY HAD TOLD US (JENKINS' TELELETTER OF 27 DECEMBER TO THOMAS) THE RUSSIANS HAD NOT YET AGREED TO THE US PROPOSAL OF LATE JANUARY FOR THE FIRST SHULTZ/SHEVARDNADZE MEETING, AND WERE HINTING THAT MARCH MIGHT BE BETTER.

4. THE REPORTS HOWEVER APPEAR TO BE MISLEADING IN IMPLYING THAT THE ONLY SUMMIT OPTIONS UNDER CONSIDERATION ARE JUNE AND SEPTEMBER, AND THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WILL NOW WILLINGLY SETTLE FOR SEPTEMBER. WE UNDERSTAND (A) THAT (TO MAINTAIN MOMENTUM) SHULTZ OPPOSES, AND WOULD WISH TO MINIMISE, ANY SLIPPAGE, AND (B) THAT THIS IS ALSO THE WHITE HOUSE POSITION (NO DOUBT BECAUSE SEPTEMBER WILL BE BUSY DOMESTICALLY, WITH CONGRESS WINDING UP BEFORE THE MID-TERM ELECTIONS, AND AWKWARD BUDGETARY/FISCAL DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN). PALMER'S HUNCH IS THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WILL TRY VERY HARD TO SECURE SOVIET AGREEMENT TO DATES NO LATER THAN JULY.

WRIGHT

EAST WEST & US/SOVIET RELATIONS

LIMITED

[COPIES SENT TO NO 10 DOWNING STREET]

SOVIET D
DEFENCE D
R D
PLANNING STAFF
EED
NAD
WED
ACDD
CRD
FED
NED
PUSD

PS
PS/LADY YOUNG
PS/MR RIFKIND
PS/MR RENTON
PS/MR EGGAR
PS/PUS
MR DEREK THOMAS
MR GOODALL
MR FERGUSSON
SIR W HARDING
MR SAMUEL
MR DAUNT
MR DAVID THOMAS
MR LONG

CONFIDENTIAL