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FM UKDEL NATO

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELNO 244

OF 091654Z OCTOBER 85

AND TO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON, MODUK ((DUS)(P) AND DACU)

AND TO PRIORITY MOSCOW, PARIS, BONN, ROME, THE HAGUE, BRUSSELS

SOVIET NUCLEAR ARMS CONTROL COUNTER-PROPOSALS: BRIEFING OF THE COUNCIL BY NITZE.

SUMMARY

1. THE COUNCIL BRIEFED BY NITZE ON THE US ASSESSMENT OF THE SOVIET PROPOSALS. FEW NEW DETAILS EMERGED. AS EXPECTED, THE US ASSESSED THE PROPOSALS AS THEY STAND AS UNBALANCED AND UNSATISFACTORY, BUT NITZE OUTLINED SOME POINTS IN THE NEW SOVIET POSITION WHICH MIGHT BE CONVERTED INTO ACCEPTABLE PROVISIONS. THE ADMINISTRATION IS FOCUSSING ON WAYS TO ADD MOMENTUM TO THE NEGOTIATIONS, AND SEEM DETERMINED NOT TO BE SEEN TO REJECT THE PROPOSALS OUT OF HAND. NITZE WARNED THAT THE COMPLEX ISSUES INVOLVED WOULD NOT BE SOLVED IN THE SHORT TERM, AND CERTAINLY THERE WOULD BE NO AGREEMENT AT THE SUMMIT.

DETAIL

2. NITZE, WHO IS GOING ON TO BONN AND ROME TO BRIEF THE FEDERAL AND ITALIAN GOVERNMENTS, STRESSED THAT HIS BRIEFING OF THE COUNCIL (FULL TEXT BY BAG) WOULD BE ONE PART OF AN INTENSIVE SERIES OF CONTINUING CONSULTATIONS, INCLUDING THE MINISTERIAL MEETING ON 15 OCTOBER. THE US HAD MANY UNANSWERED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE SOVIET PROPOSALS, BUT HE HAD BEEN ASKED BY THE PRESIDENT TO BEGIN THE CONSULTATION PROCESS NOW. THE SOVIET SIDE HAD FORMERLY PRESENTED THEIR NEW PROPOSALS IN DETAIL IN GENEVA ON 30 SEPT AND 1 OCT. THEY HAD SINCE SEEMED RELUCTANT TO ELABORATE, BUT THE US TEAM WOULD CONTINUE TO SEEK CLARIFICATION, WHICH WOULD BE REPORTED TO THE ALLIES WHEN THEY WERE BRIEFED AFTER THE THIRD ROUND ENDED IN GENEVA ON 1 NOVEMBER.

3. NITZE SAID THAT THE SOVIET PROPOSALS AMOUNTED TO A SERIES OF BANS, FREEZES, AND REDUCTIONS WHICH HAD TO BE SEEN IN THEIR INTER-RELATION. HE WENT THROUGH THE MAIN HEADINGS IN TURN, DRAWING OUT THE CHIEF IMPLICATIONS OF EACH.

4. THE PROPOSED 50 PER CENT REDUCTION IN STRATEGIC DELIVERY SYSTEMS DID NOT APPLY TO WARHEADS. THERE WAS A SEPARATE LIMITATION OF 6,000 QUOTE CHARGES UNQUOTE. THE PRINCIPAL CATCH WAS HIDDEN IN THE DEFINITION OF STRATEGIC DELIVERY SYSTEMS, WHICH RETURNED TO THE SOVIET POSITION OF 15 YEARS AGO. THE US AND ITS ALLIES HAD REJECTED IT THEN AND IN ALL SUBSEQUENT NEGOTIATIONS, SUCH AS SALT II AND III, AND THE 1981-83 START AND INF NEGOTIATIONS. US LRINF DEPLOYMENT HAD BEEN NECESSITATED BY THE UNPRECEDENTED INCREASE IN SOVIET INTERMEDIATE RANGE SYSTEMS. THE NEW SOVIET PROPOSAL WOULD INCLUDE US LRINF SYSTEMS UNDER THE STRATEGIC TOTAL, WITHOUT ANY CONSTRAINT ON SS20'S.

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5. THE SOVIET PROPOSAL WOULD ALSO INCLUDE US DUAL CAPABLE AIRCRAFT STATIONED IN EUROPE AND ASIA, INCLUDING ALL US TACTICAL AIRCRAFT EXCEPT THE A10, ALTHOUGH THEIR PRIMARY ROLE WAS CONVENTIONAL. ALL ATTACK AIRCRAFT ON THE 14 US CARRIERS (ONE OF WHICH WAS STILL UNDER CONSTRUCTION) WOULD ALSO BE INCLUDED, REGARDLESS OF THEIR DEPLOYMENT AREA. CONSEQUENTLY IT WOULD INCLUDE SYSTEMS NOT AT ANY GIVEN TIME WITHIN RANGE OF THE SOVIET UNION. SOVIET MEDIUM RANGE SYSTEMS WOULD BE EXCLUDED, INCLUDING THOSE WHICH COULD ALSO BE MOVED TO BRING THEM WITHIN RANGE NOT ONLY OF EUROPE BUT ALSO OF THE US.

6. THE PROPOSED BAN ON ALL LONG RANGE CRUISE MISSILES WOULD HALT A PART OF THE US STRATEGIC MODERNISATION PROGRAMME (SLCM AND ALCM) AS WELL AS UNDOING THE MAJOR PART OF THE LRINF PROGRAMME.

7. THE PROPOSED BAN ON NEW TYPES, DEFINED AS QUOTE TYPES NOT TESTED AS OF AN AGREED DATE UNQUOTE, PRESUMABLY IN THE FUTURE, COULD INCLUDE MIDGETMAN, TRIDENT D5, AND THE ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY BOMBER. IT WOULD APPEAR TO EXCLUDE THE SS24 AND 25, THE SSNX 23, AND THE BLACKJACK, AS WELL AS THE MX AND BII BOMBER.

8. THE PROPOSED STOP TO ALL FURTHER DEPLOYMENT OF MEDIUM RANGE SYSTEMS DID NOT APPEAR TO PRECLUDE FURTHER DEPLOYMENTS BY THE SOVIET UNION IN ASIA. THE BAN ON DEPLOYMENT TO COUNTRIES WHERE NUCLEAR WEAPONS WERE NOT ALREADY STATIONED, AND ON REPLACEMENT OF WEAPONS ALREADY STATIONED IN OTHER COUNTRIES, APPEARED TO BE AIMED AT HALTING LRINF DEPLOYMENT IN THE NETHERLANDS, AND AT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MODERNISATION ASPECTS OF THE MONTEBELLO DECISION. THE RUSSIANS HAD HOWEVER, INDICATED THAT SEPARATE INF AGREEMENT NOT DIRECTLY LINKED TO THE STRATEGIC AND DEFENCE ISSUES WAS POSSIBLE.

9. THE SOVIET PROPOSAL TO REMOVE SOME 2-300 ICBMS FROM COMBAT ALERT STATUS DID NOT APPEAR SUCH AS TO EFFECT THE FINAL OUTCOME ACCORDING TO THE TERMS OF THEIR PROPOSALS, UNDER WHICH THE US WOULD BE PERMITTED 1,680 STRATEGIC DELIVERY SYSTEMS AS DEFINED BY THE SOVIET SIDE, WHO WOULD BE PERMITTED 1,250 SLBMS, ICBMS AND HEAVY BOMBERS. CURRENT LEVELS, ACCORDING TO THE SOVIET SIDE, WERE CONFIRMED AS 2,215 SLBMS, ICBMS, AND HEAVY BOMBERS ON THE US SIDE, AS WELL AS 209 LRINF, 380 DUAL CAPABLE AIRCRAFT (DCA) AND 560 CARRIER BASED AIRCRAFT. SOVIET SYSTEMS TOTALLED 2,504 ICBMS, SLBMS AND HEAVY BOMBERS.

10. SOVIET DEFINITIONS MADE THE APPARENT RESULTING US ADVANTAGE OF 430 DELIVERY VEHICLES ILLUSORY, SINCE IT WOULD BE MORE THAN OFFSET BY EXCLUSION OF SOME 2,000 SOVIET INF SYSTEMS AS WELL AS 300 BACKFIRE BOMBERS (THEREBY CONFIRMING THAT THE US NOW REGARD BACKFIRE AS AN INTERMEDIATE RANGE SYSTEM). THE US CALCULATED THEY WOULD NEED TO REDUCE THEIR LRINF, DCA, AND CARRIER BASED AIRCRAFT BY SOME 60 PER CENT IN ORDER TO RETAIN STRATEGIC EQUIVALENCE, OR ALTERNATIVELY TO HALVE THEIR STRATEGIC FORCES IN ORDER TO KEEP THEIR INF TOTAL. EITHER POSSIBILITY WOULD RESULT IN INFERIORITY IN STRATEGIC WARHEAD NUMBERS, PROBABLY ON ALL STRATEGIC SYSTEMS.

11. NITZE CONCEDED THAT THE SOVIET PROPOSALS FOR A LIMIT OF 1,250 ON THEIR OWN STRATEGIC DELIVERY VEHICLES WAS A NEW ELEMENT. THE 6,000 WARHEAD LIMIT WOULD ALSO APPEAR TO REDUCE THEIR NUMBERS TO ABOUT 40 PER CENT BELOW THE CURRENT LEVEL. HOWEVER, THIS WOULD NOT NECESSARILY PLACE ANY CONSTRAINT ON THEIR HEAVY ICBMS, AND WOULD

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TEND TO DECREASE RATHER THAN INCREASE STABILITY BECAUSE OF THE ASYMETRIC EFFECT OF THE MODERNISATION CONSTRAINT. THE RUSSIANS WOULD RETAIN A GREATER RELATIVE ADVANTAGE IN BALLISTIC MISSILE THROW-WEIGHT, AND KEEP A LARGE PART OF THEIR PROMPT COUNTER-FORCE CAPABILITY AGAINST A REDUCED NUMBER OF US TARGETS. THE US HEAVY BOMBER FORCE WOULD BE PENALISED, WITHOUT ANY CORRESPONDING RESTRICTION ON SOVIET AIR DEFENCE IMPROVEMENT. THE US ALCM AND SLCM PROGRAMMES WOULD BE BANNED, WHILE THE SOVIET SIDE WOULD RETAIN THEIR SHORTER RANGE AIR AND SEA-LAUNCHED CRUISE MISSILES TO WHICH MOST WEST EUROPEAN TARGETS, AS WELL AS COASTAL US TARGETS, WOULD REMAIN VULNERABLE.

12. ON DEFENSIVE SYSTEMS, THE SOVIET SIDE IN GENEVA CONTINUES TO INSIST UPON A BAN ON SPACE STRIKE ARMS, INCLUDING SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH, IN CONTRADICTION OF GORBACHEV'S RECENT STATEMENT. HOWEVER, THEY NO LONGER APPEARED TO BE MAKING AGREEMENT ON THIS AN ABSOLUTE PRECONDITION TO PROGRESS ON STRATEGIC ARMS NEGOTIATION, ALTHOUGH IT WAS A CONDITION OF FINAL AGREEMENT.

13. NITZE SAID THAT SOME POSITIVE ELEMENTS WERE NONETHELESS DISCERNIBLE. THERE WAS RECOGNITION THAT SOME US LRINF COULD REMAIN IN EUROPE, ALBEIT DEFINED AS STRATEGIC SYSTEMS. AGREEMENT ON MEDIUM RANGE SYSTEMS MIGHT BE POSSIBLE WITHOUT A DIRECT LINK TO STRATEGIC AND DEFENSIVE SYSTEMS. THE SOVIET SIDE HAD RECOGNISED THAT THIRD COUNTRY FORCES WERE NOT APPROPRIATE FOR BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS IN GENEVA. PARIS AND LONDON WOULD DECIDE THEIR RESPONSES TO THE APPARENT RUSSIAN OFFER OF DIRECT TALKS: THE US COULD NOT AND WOULD NOT NEGOTIATE ABOUT BRITISH AND FRENCH SYSTEMS.

14. IN SUMMARY, THE SOVIET PROPOSALS WOULD BLOCK THE US SDII PROGRAMME, WITHOUT CONSTRAINING SIMILAR SOVIET ACTIVITY: HALT MOST OF THE US MODERNISATION PROGRAMME, AND LOCK IN SOVIET ADVANTAGES IN THIS AREA: AND ACHIEVE A ONE-SIDED OUTCOME IN TERMS OF RELATIVE FORCE BALANCES, PARTICULARLY WHERE US ALLIES WERE CONCERNED.

15. HOWEVER, THE US ADMINISTRATION WERE ATTEMPTING TO FOCUS UPON WAYS OF ADDING MOMENTUM TO THE ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATION. THEY WOULD NOT SACRIFICE THEIR BASIC OBJECTIVES, BUT WOULD CONTINUE TO PROBE THE SOVIET POSITION. CLEARLY THE COMPLEX ISSUES INVOLVED WOULD NOT BE SOLVED IN THE SHORT TERM, AND THERE WOULD BE NO ARMS CONTROL AGREEMENT AT THE SUMMIT.

16. IN CONCLUSION NITZE SAID THAT HE DISCERNED 7 POINTS WHICH MIGHT BE CONVERTED INTO ACCEPTABLE PROVISIONS. THESE WERE:

- (A) THE CONCEPT OF 50 PER CENT REDUCTION, WHICH COULD BE APPLIED TO EQUITABLE AGGREGATIONS OF FORCES.
- (B) THE 6,000 WARHEAD CEILING, WHICH COULD SIMILARLY BE APPLIED TO APPROPRIATE SYSTEMS.
- (C) THE 60 PER CENT LIMIT, WHICH MIGHT BE CONVERTED INTO A 60 OR INDEED 50 PER CENT LIMIT ON APPROPRIATE ELEMENTS OF THE STRATEGIC TRIAD.

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- (D) THE 3,600 LIMIT ON ICBM RE-ENTRY VEHICLES: THE US MIGHT PRESS THEIR OWN PROPOSED LIMIT OF 2,500.
- (E) THE SEPARATION OF INF FORCES FROM LINKAGE WITH STRATEGIC AND DEFENSIVE FORCES.
- (F) THE RECOGNITION THAT NATO'S LRINF FORCES WOULD NOT BE WITHDRAWN UNILATERALLY.
- (G) THE RECOGNITION THAT BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS COULD NOT ENCOMPASS INDEPENDENT UK AND FRENCH FORCES.

17. A NUMBER OF DETAILED QUESTIONS WERE PUT TO NITZE BY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES. THESE INCLUDED THE POSSIBILITY OF A STRATEGIC/INF MERGER, AND THE HANDLING IN GENEVA OF US INF SYSTEMS: THE DEFINITION OF PERMISSIBLE RESEARCH IN THE ABM TREATY: THE DETAILED EFFECT OF THE SOVIET PROPOSALS ON THEIR TOTAL THROW-WEIGHT, AND WHETHER THESE PROPOSALS SATISFACTORILY ADDRESSED US CONCERNS ON DESTABILISING SYSTEMS. I ASKED IN PARTICULAR ABOUT THE AMBIGUITY IN THE SOVIET POSITION ON PERMITTED RESEARCH ACTIVITY, WHETHER THEY HAD INDICATED ANY FLEXIBILITY IN AIRCRAFT TYPES TO BE INCLUDED, WHETHER THEY HAD DEFINED THE NUMBER OF QUOTE NUCLEAR CHARGES UNQUOTE ASCRIBED TO AIRCRAFT TYPES, AND ABOUT THE EFFECT ON THROW-WEIGHT. I ALSO REMINDED THE COUNCIL OF YOUR STATEMENTS IN BONN AND IN 1983 TO THE UNGA CONCERNING THE RELEVANCE OF UK SYSTEMS TO ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS.

18. CASSIERS (BELGIUM) POINTED TO THE DIFFICULTY OF ASSESSING WHETHER THE NEW SOVIET PROPOSALS WERE PURELY PROPAGANDISTIC OR CONTAINED SOME GENUINE QUOTE BAIT UNQUOTE. IN HIS VIEW THE US SHOULD SERIOUSLY CONSIDER MAKING COUNTER-PROPOSALS, SINCE THIS WOULD RESPOND BETTER TO EITHER POSSIBILITY AND WOULD RESPOND BEST TO THE NEEDS OF PUBLIC OPINION. CURIEN (FRANCE) OUTLINED HIS COUNTRY'S CRITERIA FOR ASSESSING THE PROPOSALS, NAMELY THAT STRATEGIC REDUCTIONS WERE A MATTER FOR THE SUPER-POWERS TO DISCUSS, BASED ON EQUITABLE DEFINITIONS: FRANCE DID NOT WISH TO SEE AN EXTENSION OF THE ARMS RACE IN SPACE (THEY ACCEPTED THAT THE MILITARY USE OF SPACE WAS ALREADY A REALITY) AND HOPED FOR AGREEMENT IN THIS AREA. ON THE OFFER OF SOVIET-FRENCH TALKS ON INF FORCES, FRANCE WAS NOT PREPARED TO ENTER INTO NEGOTIATION. FRENCH FORCES WERE ALL STRATEGIC, AND THERE WAS NO MARGIN IN THEIR MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR DETERRENCE. (HE BRIEFLY REFERRED TO THE FRENCH CONDITIONS FOR A CHANGE IN THEIR POSITION.) FRANCE REJECTED A CONCEPT OF A QUOTE EURO-STRATEGIC UNQUOTE BALANCE BECAUSE EUROPE WAS THREATENED BY SYSTEMS OTHER THAN INF, AND BECAUSE IT WOULD BEGIN THE PROCESS OF DECOUPLING.

19. IN RESPONSE, NITZE SAID THAT IN THE PAST THE US HAD INSISTED UPON THE SEPARATION OF INTERMEDIATE RANGE AND STRATEGIC FORCES FOR NEGOTIATING PURPOSES. HIS PERSONAL VIEW WAS THAT THEY SHOULD CONTINUE TO DO SO. THERE WAS NOTHING SO FAR WHICH INDICATED THAT THE 8 JANUARY AGREEMENT ON AN OVERALL NEGOTIATION CONDUCTED IN THREE SEPARATE GROUPS NEEDED ALTERATION. ON SDI RESEARCH, NITZE SAID THAT

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THE ABM TREATY DID NOT MENTION RESEARCH (AS OPPOSED TO DEPLOYMENT) INTO NEW TECHNOLOGIES WHICH, WAS THEREFORE CLEARLY PERMISSIBLE. THE SOVIET SIDE WOULD HOWEVER, CONTINUE TO INTERPRET THE TREATY IN A SELF-SERVING MANNER, WHICH PROHIBITED US RESEARCH WHILE LEAVING THEIR OWN UNCONSTRAINED. HE CONCEDED THERE WAS AN APPARENT CONTRADICTION IN THE SOVIET ATTITUDE TO SDI RESEARCH, BUT OFFERED NO FURTHER OBSERVATION.

20. ON BALLISTIC MISSILE THROW-WEIGHT, AND IN PARTICULAR A REFERENCE MADE TO A RAND CORPORATION REPORT INDICATING THAT THE SOVIET PROPOSAL MIGHT REDUCE THEIR TOTAL THROW-WEIGHT FROM 5.7 MILLION KG TO 2.3 MILLION KG, NITZE KNEW OF NOTHING IN THE PROPOSALS WHICH WOULD HAVE SUCH AN EFFECT. THE LARGEST PROPORTION OF THEIR THROW-WEIGHT WAS ON THE 308 SS18 MISSILES WHICH WOULD NOT NECESSAIRLY BE SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCED. UNDOUBTEDLY THERE WOULD BE SOME OVERALL REDUCTION, BUT THE NET EFFECT WOULD BE TO DECREASE THE SURVIVABILITY OF THE US LAND-BASED ICBM FORCE.

21. NITZE SAID THAT THE NUMBERS OF AIRCRAFT ASCRIBED TO THE US BY THE SOVIET UNION WERE NOT FAR OFF THE CORRECT TOTAL, BUT THEY HAD INDICATED NO FLEXIBILITY IN THEIR DEFINITION. THEY WERE COUNTING 40 NUCLEAR CAPABLE AIRCRAFT FOR EACH OF THE 14 CARRIERS, AND INCLUDED SHORTER RANGE MODERN AIRCRAFT SUCH AS THE F16 AND F18. THE SOVIET SIDE HAD ALWAYS EXCLUDED ALL THEIR OWN AIRCRAFT WITH A RANGE OF LESS THAN 1,000 KM (AND SOME WITH A LONGER RANGE). THEY HAD GIVEN NO SPECIFIC NUMBERS OF WEAPONS ASCRIBED TO EACH AIRCRAFT, BUT HAD GIVEN SOME AGGREGATIONS WHICH ENABLED THE US TO DO SOME QUOTE GUESS WORK UNQUOTE.

22. HE SAID THAT THE BELGIAN PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE'S POINT, THIS WAS UNDER CONSIDERATION, BUT THE FIRST TASK WAS TO UNDERSTAND THE SUBSTANCE OF THE SOVIET PROPOSALS, WHILE RECOGNISING THAT THAT HAD TO BE RELATED TO THE QUESTION OF PUBLIC PRESENTATION.

23. IN A SHORT PRESS CONFERENCE FOLLOWING THE BRIEFING, NITZE REMAINED COMMENDABLY RESTRAINED. HE REFUSED TO GIVE A COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT OR TO BE DRAWN ON ALLIED REACTIONS TO THE BRIEFING. HE CONFIRMED THAT THE MAIN ELEMENTS OF GORBACHEV'S PARIS SPEECH HAD BEEN REPEATED, WITH ADDITIONAL DETAIL, IN GENEVA. HE ALSO CONFIRMED REPORTS OF SOVIET AMBIGUITY IN THEIR POSITION ON SDI RESEARCH. HE ACCEPTED THAT THE PROPOSALS CONTAINED DIFFERENCES FROM PREVIOUS SOVIET POSITIONS, BUT THEY WOULD NEED FURTHER ANALYSIS BEFORE IT COULD BE CONCLUDED WHETHER THEY WERE POSITIVE, OR WHETHER THEY NEEDED REDEFINITION.

GRAHAM

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