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FM WASHINGTON

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

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INFO PRIORITY MODUK, PARIS, BONN, UKDEL NATO

MODUK (FOR DACU).

MY TELNO 270: ARMS CONTROL: US RESPONSE TO GORBACHEV'S 15
JANUARY PROPOSALS

SUMMARY

1. SOME RETHINKING OF THE PROPOSED US RESPONSE ON INF IN THE LIGHT OF ALLIED AND JAPANESE VIEWS. RESPONSE UNLIKELY TO ISSUE FOR ANOTHER WEEK.
2. INTER-AGENCY DEBATE ALSO REOPENED ON THE DANGERS OF QUOTE A NUCLEAR FREE WORLD UNQUOTE AS A POLICY AIM. BUT DOUBTS ABOUT WHETHER THE PRESIDENT WILL BACK OFF.

DETAIL

3. CONTACTS IN STATE AND OSD HAVE GIVEN US (ON A STRICTLY PERSONAL BASIS: PLEASE PROTECT) AN ACCOUNT OF INTER-AGENCY DISCUSSIONS FOLLOWING NITZE'S CONSULTATIONS IN EUROPE AND ROWNY'S IN ASIA. IT IS CLEAR THAT THE DEGREE OF CONCERN, WHICH BOTH HAVE REPORTED, ABOUT THE PROPOSED US PROPOSAL ON INF HAS LED TO A PAUSE FOR REFLECTION. WHITE HOUSE AND STATE ARE STILL KEEN THAT THE PRESIDENT SHOULD REPLY TO GORBACHEV BEFORE THE SOVIET PARTY CONGRESS OPENS ON 26 FEBRUARY. BUT IT LOOKS AS IF A REPLY MUCH BEFORE THEN WILL NOT NOW BE FEASIBLE. POINDEXTER HAS GONE TO CALIFORNIA TO BRIEF THE PRESIDENT ON THE NITZE/ROWNY FINDINGS: A SAC(G) MEETING TO LOOK AT REVISED INF OPTIONS IS LIKELY TO TAKE PLACE ON 18 OR 19 FEBRUARY SEMI-COLON AND A SUBSEQUENT NSC DISCUSSION IS ALSO LIKELY (POSSIBLY ON 21 FEBRUARY) TO DISPLAY THE OPTIONS TO THE PRESIDENT. FINAL DRAFTING OF THE RESPONSE WILL AWAIT HIS REACTIONS (? OVER THE WEEKEND OF 22/23 FEBRUARY).
4. THE PRINCIPAL REASON FOR THE PAUSE FOR REFLECTION IS FOREIGN REACTIONS TO THE PLANNED INF PROPOSAL. ROWNY, WHO HAD THE TASK OF PERSUADING THE JAPANESE THAT A 50 PER CENT REDUCTION IN ASIAN SS20S, AND A (FOLLOWING WORD IN SQUARE BRACKETS) QUASI-COMMITMENT TO THEIR SUBSEQUENT ELIMINATION, WOULD SUFFICE, APPARENTLY RECEIVED AN EARFULL FROM NAKASONE. NITZE HAS CLEARLY GIVEN A FULL ACCOUNT OF UK/FRENCH/DUTCH CONCERNS ABOUT THE ELIMINATION OF US LRINF IN EUROPE. BOTH IN STATE AND IN OSD IT IS THOUGHT UNLIKELY THAT THE ORIGINAL PROPOSAL WILL GO ANY FURTHER IN ITS PRESENT FORM: SHULTZ, WHO PREVIOUSLY ADVOCATED IT, IS NOW EXPECTED TO RETREAT, GIVEN THE STRENGTH OF ALLIED AND JAPANESE OBJECTIONS.
5. AMONG THE NEW OPTIONS WHICH MAY BE PUT TO THE SAC(G) ARE THE FOLLOWING FOUR:

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- (A) A REPACKAGING OF THE ORIGINAL PROPOSAL AS A GLOBAL ZERO/
ZERO SOLUTION, BUT WITH DIFFERENTIAL EUROPEAN/ASIAN
SS20 REDUCTION SCHEDULES. THE 50 PER CENT FIGURE FOR INITIAL
REDUCTIONS IN ASIAN SS20S WOULD DISAPPEAR: INSTEAD,
AGREED REDUCTION SCHEDULES WOULD INVOLVE FASTER
REDUCTIONS TO ZERO IN EUROPE THAN IN ASIA.
- (B) A FRONT-END-LOADED VERSION OF THE ORIGINAL PROPOSAL,
WHEREBY THE STAGE 1 REDUCTION IN ASIAN SS20S WOULD BE
75 OR 80 PER CENT, NOT 50 PER CENT.
- (C) A QUITE DIFFERENT PROPOSAL WHICH WOULD DROP THE EUROPEAN/
ASIAN SUB-CEILINGS, AND SIMPLY CALL FOR REDUCTIONS OF 80 PER
CENT (OR PERHAPS 75 PER CENT) IN SS20S, ESTABLISHING
A MUTUAL GLOBAL CEILING AT THE RESIDUAL NUMBER. UNDER THIS
VARIANT BOTH SIDES WOULD BE FREE TO DEPLOY WITHOUT
GEOGRAPHICAL LIMITATION UP TO THE AGREED CEILING.
- (D) EQUAL GLOBAL CEILINGS (PERHAPS AT 20 PER CENT OF CURRENTLY
DEPLOYED SS20S) WITH THREE GEOGRAPHICAL SUB-CEILINGS.
NEITHER THE US NOR THE SOVIET UNION WOULD BE PERMITTED
"EUROPEAN OR ASIAN" DEPLOYMENTS: SS20 DEPLOYMENTS
WOULD BE CONFINED TO A ZONE BETWEEN THE URALS AND
NOVOSIBIRSK (WHICH WOULD PRESUMABLY BE REGARDED AS NEITHER IN
EUROPE NOR IN ASIA) AND THE US WOULD RETAIN THE RIGHT
TO HAVE AVAILABLE IN THE US A MATCHING NUMBER OF SYSTEMS.

6. OPTIONS (A), (B) AND (D) COULD BE PRESENTED AS (PARTIALLY)
MEETING THE JAPANESE POINT. THEY MAY ALSO HAVE WHITE HOUSE APPEAL,
IN THAT THE PRESIDENT WOULD NOT APPEAR INCONSISTENT ON EUROPEAN
DEPLOYMENT OF US INF. BUT OPTION (C) IS THE ONLY ONE THAT WOULD
ALLOW PERSHING 2 AND GLCM DEPLOYMENTS IN EUROPE AND HENCE THE ONLY
ONE THAT TAKES MUCH ACCOUNT OF EUROPEAN OBJECTIONS TO THE ORIGINAL
PLAN. (IT MIGHT OF COURSE SEEM LESS GOOD TO THE JAPANESE THAN E.G.
(D).)

7. THE SAC(G) WILL ALSO LOOK AGAIN AT EARLIER OPTIONS
INCLUDING OSD'S PREFERENCE, I.E. STICKING TO THE INF ELEMENT IN
THE 1 NOVEMBER US PROPOSAL.

8. A SECOND, AND LESS WELL-FOCUSED, DEBATE IS NOW PROCEEDING
ON THE STRENGTH OF NITZE'S REPORTS OF ALLIED CONCERN, PARTICULARLY
IN LONDON, ABOUT THE ESPOUSAL OF THE AIM OF A QUOTE NUCLEAR FREE
WORLD UNQUOTE. UK VIEWS ARE STRONGLY SUPPORTED BY OSD, AND BY
MOST OF THE EXPERTS IN STATE, TO WHOM THEY CAME OF COURSE AS NO
SURPRISE: IT WAS HOWEVER CLEAR, WHEN THE PUS SAW HIM ON
12 FEBRUARY, THAT WHITEHEAD HAD BEEN SURPRISED AT NITZE'S REPORT
OF THE STRENGTH WITH WHICH THESE VIEWS ARE HELD. IT IS SAID THAT
SHULTZ TOO WAS STRUCK BY THIS. AMONG OFFICIALS IN BOTH OSD AND
STATE THERE IS SOME PESSIMISM AS TO WHETHER CHANGES IN WHITE
HOUSE RHETORIC CAN BE ENGINEERED. EVEN IN DOD THERE IS NO HOPE
THAT THE JANUARY 1985 SHULTZ/GROMYKO REFERENCE, SUBSEQUENTLY
RATIFIED AT THE SUMMIT, TO THE EVENTUAL COMPLETE ABOLITION
OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS CAN BE CLAWED BACK. BUT AT LEAST THE ARGUMENTS
FOR NOT NOW GOING FURTHER DOWN THAT ROAD ARE BACK ON THE TABLE.

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COMMENT

9. FOR ONCE, THE NITZE/ROWNY EXERCISE AND THE SCG AND NAC DISCUSSIONS HAVE BEEN A GENUINE CONSULTATION EXERCISE. THE CURRENT RETHINKING PROVES THE POINT. ALTHOUGH NO-ONE FEELS LIKE PREDICTING WITH CONFIDENCE WHERE THE PRESIDENT WILL FINALLY COME OUT, SOME MODIFICATION OF THE MNF PROPOSAL SEEMS VIRTUALLY CERTAIN. BUT UNLESS THE IDEA OF A REPLY BEFORE THE SOVIET PARTY CONGRESS IS DROPPED, IT SEEMS UNLIKELY THAT THERE WILL BE A FURTHER FORMAL CONSULTATION WITH ALLIES.

WRIGHT

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-3-
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