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IMMEDIATE

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US/SOVIET ARMS CONTROL TALKS

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MR DAVID THOMAS

MR POWELL, NO 10 DOWNING ST
MR D NICHOLLS, DUS(P) } MOD
B. NPS(S) }
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RESIDENT CLERK

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TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 85 OF 31 JANUARY

INFO IMMEDIATE MODUK(DACU)

INFO PRIORITY WASHINGTON, UKDEL NATO

INFO ROUTINE UKDIS GENEVA, UKDEL VIENNA, PARIS

INFO SAVING UKDEL STOCKHOLM

GERMAN VIEWS ON ARMS CONTROL

SUMMARY

1. FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OPTIMISTIC THAT REVIVED ARMS CONTROL DIALOGUE CAN IN TIME BRING REAL PROGRESS, AND SATISFIED WITH CONSULTATION PROCESS SO FAR. BUT UNDER THE SURFACE IS A FEAR OF BEING LEFT OUT OF THE ARMS CONTROL PROCESS AND THAT THE AMERICANS WILL NOT HEED EUROPEAN ADVICE.

2. FEDERAL ARMS CONTROL AMBASSADOR RUTH, JUST BACK FROM WASHINGTON, SEES POSSIBILITY THAT AMERICANS WILL EVENTUALLY ACCEPT SOME RESTRICTIONS ON SDI DEPLOYMENT, IF DEEP CUTS IN SOVIET BALLISTIC MISSILES CAN BE OBTAINED. TOTAL AMERICAN OBDDURACY ON CW VERIFICATION.

DETAIL

3. MINISTER DEBRIEFED RUTH TODAY ON HIS RETURN FROM WASHINGTON. HE HAD BEEN STRUCK BY THE MOOD THERE: IN GOVERNMENT AND THE PUBLIC, THERE WAS A NEW VISION OF A NUCLEAR-FREE WORLD. PURSUIT OF THIS OBJECTIVE THROUGH SDI RESEARCH WAS ACCEPTED AS A LEGITIMATE AND NECESSARY GOAL IN ITS OWN RIGHT.

US/SOVIET NEGOTIATIONS IN GENEVA

4. RUTH WAS IMPRESSED BY THE THREE US DELEGATION LEADERS, THEIR SERIOUSNESS OF PURPOSE AND THEIR READINESS TO CONSULT THE EUROPEANS. DETAILS OF THE US NEGOTIATING POSITION WERE STILL BEING WORKED ON, BUT ON INF RUTH WAS SURE THAT THE BRIEF WOULD BE CLOSE TO THE AUTUMN 1983 PROPOSALS. RUTH WAS UNCERTAIN HOW FAR THE QUESTION OF TRADE-OFFS BETWEEN SPACE WEAPONS AND CUTS IN BALLISTIC MISSILES HAD BEEN THOUGHT THROUGH: HE REMARKED THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT FOR THE EUROPEANS TO TALK OF 'BALLISTIC MISSILES' IN THIS CONTEXT, SINCE OUR INTEREST WAS THAT THE LEVERAGE PROVIDED BY SDI SHOULD BE APPLIED

OUR INTEREST WAS THAT THE LEVERAGE PROVIDED BY SDI SHOULD BE APPLIED NOT ONLY TO ICBMS BUT ALSO TO INF. WHILE THE AMERICANS TOOK SERIOUSLY THEIR OBLIGATION UNDER THE ABM TREATY TO CONSULT, THEY CERTAINLY HAD IN MIND THAT THEY MIGHT DEPLOY SDI SYSTEMS IN DUE COURSE. RUTH THOUGHT THAT THEY MIGHT BE WILLING TO ACCEPT RESTRICTIONS ON FUTURE SDI DEPLOYMENT IN RETURN FOR DEEP CUTS IN BALLISTIC MISSILES, BUT NOT A BAN ON ALL SDI DEPLOYMENT.

5. ACCEPTING THAT WORK ON DEFENSIVE WEAPONS IS NOW PART OF THE SCENERY, RUTH DOES NOT EXCLUDE, AS THE BEST EVENTUAL OUTCOME, SOME AGREED MIX OF DEFENSIVE AND OFFENSIVE SYSTEMS WHICH IS WORKED CAREFULLY INTO A NATO STRATEGY STILL BUILT ON DETERRENCE, BUT AT LOWER LEVELS OF OFFENSIVE WEAPONRY.

CONSULTATION

6. RUTH WAS SATISFIED THAT ON INF THE AMERICANS WOULD CONSULT AS FULLY IN THE FUTURE AS IN THE PAST. HE HAD URGED AN SCG (AND IN PARTICULAR QUINT) MEETING IN ADVANCE OF THE MARCH NEGOTIATIONS. ON STRATEGIC SYSTEMS AND SPACE, THE AMERICANS WERE RELUCTANT TO EXTEND EXISTING CONSULTATION PROCEDURES. RUTH HAD PLEADED FOR REVIVAL OF THE SMALL CONSULTATIVE GROUP OF 5 ALLIES ON SDI. HE THOUGHT IT IMPORTANT THAT THE UK REINFORCE THIS POINT. RUTH SEES AN IMPORTANT INTER-RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GENEVA AND OTHER EXISTING ARMS CONTROL FORA AND REGRETS THAT THERE IS NO FORUM WHERE ALL THE THREADS CAN BE DRAWN TOGETHER, AND ALSO THAT NO SINGLE SPOKESMAN IN WASHINGTON CAN SPEAK AUTHORITATIVELY ACROSS THE BOARD.

CW

7. RUTH MET TOTAL STONE WALL ON ARTICLE X. THERE WAS NO DISPOSITION WHATSOEVER TO MOVE, PARTLY BECAUSE EXISTING DRAFT CONVENTION HAD BEEN NEGOTIATED RIGHT THROUGH THE ADMINISTRATION AND BECOME A TABLET OF STONE. THE QUADRILATERAL FORUM HAD HAD NO IMPACT: NOT LEAST BECAUSE THE ALTERNATIVE ARTICLE X (OURS) RESULTING FROM THAT CONSULTATION WAS OPEN TO THE PENTAGON OBJECTION THAT ACDA HAD BEEN THE NEGOTIATORS. RUTH FORESAW PROGRESS ON ARTICLE X ONLY IF THE PRESIDENT HIMSELF COULD BE BROUGHT TO REALISE THAT THE CURRENT US POSITION WAS A BAR TO PROGRESS. PERHAPS REAGAN COULD BE PERSUADED THAT ABSENCE OF PROGRESS ON CW WOULD REPRESENT A MAJOR FLAW IN HIS IMAGE AS A MAN OF PEACE WHO COULD REDUCE THE DANGERS CAUSED BY THE MOST TERRIBLE SORTS OF WEAPONS. RUTH SEES PROGRESS ON CW AT GENEVA AS HAVING PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE FOR THE ALLIANCE, BOTH FOR SUBSTANTIVE REASONS AND BECAUSE ABSENCE OF MOVEMENT WOULD INVITE ACCUSATIONS ON OTHER CD ISSUES (CTB, PNW ETC).

MBFR

8. GENSCHEW NOW ATTACHED GREAT IMPORTANCE TO MBFR, PARTLY AS THE SOLE ALLIANCE/WARSAW PACT MULTILATERAL NEGOTIATION, PARTLY BECAUSE THE CONVENTIONAL IMBALANCE IN EUROPE REMAINED A MAJOR SECURITY PROBLEM. OFFICIALS WERE THEREFORE LOOKING AGAIN AT HOW TO INJECT NEW LIFE INTO THE NEGOTIATIONS (REPORT BY TELETYPE).

CDE

9. RUTH STRESSED IMPORTANCE OF THIS AS ANOTHER MULTILATERAL FORUM. HE SAW THE NEW SOVIET PAPER ON NUF AS A SIGN OF INTEREST IN CDE.

FEDERAL PUBLIC OPINION

10. FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAVE DELIBERATELY ENCOURAGED PUBLIC OPINION TO EXPECT A LONG HAUL IN GENEVA. RUTH SAW NO IMMEDIATE PROBLEMS FROM PUBLIC PRESSURE, BUT EXPECTED SOVIET WEDGE-DRIVING E.G. USING THE DECOUPLING ARGUMENT OVER SDI.

CRN: PARA 1 LINE 4 LAST WORD SHOULD READ EUROPEAN

BULLARD