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FROM UKDEL NATO 031710Z JUL

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 325 OF3 JULY 1980

INFO IMMEDIATE BONN WASHINGTON PARIS MOSCOW.

SAVING BRUSSELS OTTAWA ANKARA OSLO ROME COPENHAGEN THE HAGUE

ATHENS LISBON REKYJAVIK BMG BERLIN AND LUXEMBURG.

*Read full.**MT*

MY TELNO 321 (NOT TO ALL) BRIEFING BY VAN WELL ON CHANCELLOR
SCHMIDT'S VISIT TO MOSCOW : TNF/SALT

1. VAN WELL BRIEFED THE COUNCIL IN RESTRICTED SESSION THIS MORNING ON THE SCHMIDT VISIT. MY THREE IFTS REPORT HIS BRIEFING ON MBFR, CSCE AND AFGHANISTAN.
2. ON TNF/SALT, VAN WELL GAVE A DETAILED ACCOUNT OF THE SOVIET RESPONSE TO THE TWO QUESTIONS WHICH PRESIDENT CARTER HAD ASKED SCHMIDT TO PUT TO THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP (PARA 4 OF BONN TELNO 525 REFERS).
3. ON THE QUESTION WHETHER THE SOVIET UNION WAS PREPARED TO ABIDE BY THE PROVISIONS OF SALT II PENDING RATIFICATION, BREZHNEV HAD MERELY SAID THAT THE PROVISIONS OF A TREATY COULD NOT BE BINDING UNTIL THE TREATY ENTERED INTO FORCE. THE GERMANS HAD THE IMPRESSION HOWEVER THAT BREZHNEV WAS STATING THIS AS AS A POINT OF PRINCIPLE IN INTERNATIONAL LAW AND THAT IT DID NOT MEAN THE SOVIET UNION WOULD NOT BE PREPARED IN PRACTICE TO ABIDE BY THE PROVISIONS OF SALT II. IN ADDITION TO BLAMING THE US ADMINISTRATION FOR THE FAILURE TO RATIFY SALT II, BREZHNEV HAD CRITICISED THE REST OF THE ALLIANCE FOR NOT PUTTING SUFFICIENT PRESSURE ON THE US OVER THIS.
4. IN ANSWER TO THE SECOND AMERICAN QUESTION (WHETHER THE SOVIET UNION WAS PREPARED TO ENTER INTO PREPARATORY TALKS ON SALT III BEFORE THE RATIFICATION OF SALT II) BREZHNEV HAD ADVANCED FOUR LINES OF THOUGHT. IN THE FIRST, HE HAD SAID THAT THE SOVIET UNION COULD SEE LITTLE GAIN FROM ENTERING INTO TALKS ON SALT III WHEN SALT II HAD NOT BEEN RATIFIED. HE WENT ON TO CRITICISE IN STANDARD TERMS THE ALLIANCE DECISION ON TNF AS AN ATTEMPT TO DESTROY THE STRATEGIC BALANCE BETWEEN EAST AND WEST. HE SAID THAT THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC COULD NOT ESCAPE PART OF THE BLAME FOR THE DECISION (SCHMIDT HAD RESPONDED THAT NOT ONLY HAD HE AGREED TO THE DECISION BUT HAD PLAYED A LEADING PART IN PROMOTING IT). BREZHNEV ARGUED THAT THE DANGERS OF THE SS20 HAD BEEN WILDLY EXAGGERATED. ¹ IN THE WESTERN PART OF THE SOVIET UNION THEY WOULD REPLACE THE SS4 AND SS5. THEY WERE QUOTE MODERN UNQUOTE BUT NOT QUOTE NEW UNQUOTE WEAPONS SINCE, UNLIKE NATO/TNF, THEY INVOLVED

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NO INCREASE IN YIELD. THE SOVIET UNION WAS NOT STRIVING FOR SUPERIORITY IN THE STRATEGIC BALANCE NOR FOR A FIRST STRIKE CAPACITY. NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD BEGIN ON MEDIUM RANGE WEAPONS ON THE LINES PROPOSED BY THE SOVIET UNION IN OCTOBER 1979.

IF STATIONING OF ALLIANCE TNF WENT AHEAD, THE SOVIET UNION AND HER ALLIES WOULD TAKE ALL MEASURES TO RESTORE THE BALANCE EVEN THOUGH THEY WERE AGAINST AN ARMS RACE.

5. THE SECOND LINE OF THOUGHT WAS THAT AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF THE ALLIANCE DECISION OF 12 DECEMBER 1979, MEDIUM RANGE MISSILES COULD BE DISCUSSED IN THE FRAMEWORK OF SALT III. BUT ALL STRATEGIC FACTORS WOULD NEED TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT AT THAT TIME AND IN ANY CASE THE WAY WAS BLOCKED AT PRESENT BECAUSE THE US HAD NOT RATIFIED SALT II.

6. THIRDLY, BREZHNEV REJECTED THE IDEA OF NON-DEPLOYMENT PENDING NEGOTIATIONS, SINCE THIS WOULD INVOLVE A UNILATERAL MEASURE BY THE SOVIET UNION.

7. FINALLY BREZHNEV ~~MADE~~ THE SUGGESTION IN MOSCOW TELNO 456 FOR DISCUSSIONS ON MEDIUM RANGE MISSILES NOW WITHOUT WAITING FOR THE RATIFICATION OF SALT II. VAN WELL THOUGHT THAT BREZHNEV'S STATEMENT THAT THE RESULTS OF SUCH DISCUSSIONS WOULD NOT BECOME EFFECTIVE UNTIL AFTER RATIFICATION OF SALT II MIGHT IMPLY THAT THE DISCUSSIONS COULD BE COMPLETED AND AN AGREEMENT DRAWN UP EVEN BEFORE SALT II WAS RATIFIED. BREZHNEV HAD MADE IT CLEAR THAT HE DID NOT ENVISAGE ENDLESS DISCUSSIONS. GROMYKO HAD SAID THAT THE RUSSIANS WANTED US FBS INCLUDED IN THESE DISCUSSIONS, BUT NOT UK, FRENCH AND CHINESE SYSTEMS. GROMYKO HAD ADDED HOWEVER THAT QUOTE ALL COMPONENTS SHOULD BE DISCUSSED IN SALT III UNQUOTE. (VAN WELL COULD NOT CLARIFY WHAT GROMYKO MEANT PRECISELY BY THE TERM QUOTE COMPONENTS UNQUOTE.

8. SCHMIDT SAID THAT THE LAST SOVIET SUGGESTION WAS INTERESTING AND HE WOULD INFORM THE US AND THE OTHER ALLIES. HE ASKED WHETHER HIS ASSUMPTION THAT SS20, S4 S5 AND BACK-FIRE WERE INCLUDED IN SOVIET CRITERIA FOR SUCH DISCUSSIONS WAS CORRECT. GROMYKO'S REPLY WAS QUOTE THE APPETITE GROWS WITH EATING UNQUOTE.

9. VAN WELL SAID THAT THE PRELIMINARY GERMAN ASSESSMENT WAS THAT A REVERSAL OF THE ALLIANCE TNF DECISION WAS NO LONGER A SOVIET PRECONDITION FOR TALKS ON MEDIUM RANGE MISSILES. THEY DID NOT REGARD THE SOVIET SUGGESTION AS A QUOTE BREAKTHROUGH UNQUOTE BUT THOUGHT THAT IT REPRESENTED SOME MOVEMENT AND DESERVED SERIOUS CONSIDERATION AND STUDY IN THE ALLIANCE. THEY DID NOT BELIEVE THAT TO ACCEPT THE SOVIET SUGGESTION FOR INCLUSION OF FBS IN THE TALKS WOULD MEAN ACCEPTING LIMITATION ON SUCH WEAPONS IN ADVANCE. VAN WELL ATTRIBUTED THE SOVIET SUGGESTION TO A REALISATION THAT THE ALLIANCE WAS DETERMINED TO STICK TO ITS TNF DECISION.

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10. THIS LAST POINT WAS ECHOED BY MYSELF AND GLITMAN (US). VAN WELL TOLD VAN USSEL (BELGIUM) IN ANSWER TO A QUESTION THAT THE NEW SOVIET WILLINGNESS TO TALK WOULD NOT BE AFFECTED BY POSITIVE BELGIAN AND DUTCH DECISIONS ON TNF BASING, AND AGREED WHEN LUNS SUGGESTED THAT, ON THE CONTRARY, ANY SIGNS OF WAVERING IN THE ALLIANCE WOULD WEAKEN THE PROSPECTS FOR ARMS CONTROL TALKS. IN ANSWER TO A QUESTION FROM OLCAY (TURKEY) VAN WELL SAID THAT THE SOVIET SIDE HAD NOT GIVEN ANY INDICATION OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL LIMITS THEY ENVISAGED FOR DISCUSSIONS ON FORWARD-BASED SYSTEMS. HARDY (CANADA) SPECULATED ON WHETHER PREPARATORY US/SOVIET TALKS WOULD MERGE AT SOME POINT WITH SALT III IN SUCH A WAY THAT THE NUCLEAR SYSTEMS OF OTHER COUNTRIES WOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE NEGOTIATIONS. I AND ARNAUD (FRANCE) INTERVENED TO SAY THAT WE SAW NO REASON TO INDULGE IN SPECULATION OF THIS SORT AT THIS STAGE.

FCO PLEASE PASS SAVING ADDRESSEES.

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