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FM WASHINGTON
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELNO 721
OF 271850Z MARCH 90
INFO IMMEDIATE PARIS, BONN, MOSCOW, EAST BERLIN

MY TELEGRAM NO. 662:
2 + 4 TALKS : THE SECURITY ISSUES

SUMMARY

1. AMERICANS AGREE ABOUT THE NEED TO DEEPEN COORDINATION AMONG THE WESTERN FOUR ON SECURITY ISSUES. NO RESPONSES TO OUR QUESTIONS ON SPECIFIC ASPECTS AS YET. CONCERNS ABOUT THE FRENCH ATTITUDE HEIGHTENED BY REPORT OF MITTERRAND'S 25 MARCH TELEVISION INTERVIEW. FURTHER EVIDENCE OF POSSIBLE EARLY SHIFT ON SNF IN ORDER TO PRE-EMPT PRESSURES FOR DENUCLEARISATION. OUR POINTS GENERALLY WELL TAKEN. A FURTHER ROUND WITH ZOELICK DUE ON 2 APRIL.

DETAIL

2. WOOD SAW ZOELICK ON 27 MARCH, PRIMARILY TO UNDERLINE THE NEED TO COME TO AN EARLY UNDERSTANDING AMONG THE WESTERN FOUR ON THE HANDLING OF THE SECURITY ASPECTS OF UNIFICATION - TACTICALLY AND AS FAR AS POSSIBLE, SUBSTANTIVELY - AGAINST THE RISK OF SOVIET PRESSURE AND GERMAN VULNERABILITY TO IT. HE WENT THROUGH THE POINTS IN WESTON'S LETTER OF 16 MARCH, MAKING IT CLEAR THAT WE WERE NOT SEEKING TO PROVIDE PRESCRIPTIONS ON THESE FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS BUT TO PROVIDE PRELIMINARY VIEWS ON THE GROUND THAT HAD TO BE COVERED AND ON WHICH WE SHOULD AIM TO ARRIVE AT COMMON POSITIONS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

3. ZOELICK SAID THAT HE HEARTILY ENDORSED THE NEED TO GET THE WESTERN ACT TOGETHER, AND SOONER RATHER THAN LATER. THIS HAD BEEN BROUGHT HOME TO HIM FORCEFULLY BY THE REMARKS REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN MADE BY MITTERRAND IN HIS TELEVISION INTERVIEW ON 25 MARCH IN WHICH THE FRENCH PRESIDENT SEEMED TO BE CONTEMPLATING A NEW-LOOK NATO AFTER GERMAN UNIFICATION IN WHICH THE RUSSIANS WOULD PULL THEIR TROOPS OUT OF EAST GERMANY IN RETURN FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF NATO FORCES FROM WEST GERMAN SOIL. THIS WAS HARDLY HELPFUL. FRENCH POLICY SEEMED AT PRESENT TO VEER AROUND THREE CONFLICTING ELEMENTS: EC INTEGRATION: A EUROPEAN BALANCE OF POWER INCLUDING A FRANCO-RUSSIAN AXIS: AND CONTINUING AMERICAN INVOLVEMENT IN EUROPE WITHOUT DEFINING HOW THIS WAS SUPPOSED TO BE ACHIEVED.

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PERHAPS THE BRITISH COULD WORK ON THEM.

4. WOOD SAID THAT WE HAD NO FIXED IDEAS ON HOW CONSULTATION AMONG THE WESTERN FOUR MIGHT BE ARRANGED, BUT THE PROCESS OUGHT TO HAVE STARTED IN EARNEST BEFORE THE NEXT 2 + 4 MEETING. BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN US AND, SEPARATELY, WITH THE GERMANS WERE OBVIOUSLY IMPORTANT. IN THAT CONTEXT WE HOPED THAT IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO GET TOGETHER WITH ZOELICK AND BLACKWILL ON THE EVENING OF 9 APRIL IN WASHINGTON IN THE AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE. ZOELICK AGREED: SEITZ SHOULD BE INVOLVED TOO. IT WAS POSSIBLE, BUT NO MORE, THAT HE AND SEITZ WOULD BE IN EUROPE ON OR AROUND 9 APRIL, IN WHICH CASE IT WOULD MAKE MORE SENSE TO TRANSFER THE MEETINGS TO BRUSSELS FROM WASHINGTON. WOOD SAID IT MIGHT ALSO BE DESIRABLE TO SET UP A 1 + 3 SUB-GROUP AT A LATER STAGE TO CONSIDER CERTAIN TECHNICAL ASPECTS.

5. ZOELICK SAID THAT IT WOULD BE IMPORTANT TO PRESERVE FLEXIBILITY AND ENSURE THAT THE GERMANS WERE FULLY INVOLVED AT EVERY STAGE. IT WAS ALSO VITAL THAT ACTIVE CONSULTATIONS TOOK PLACE IN THE ALLIANCE AT EVERY STAGE - AND THAT THE ARRANGEMENTS WERE NOT OVERLY FORMALISTIC IN WAYS WHICH COULD UPSET THE FRENCH (AS WORNER SEEMED IN DANGER OF DOING).

6. ZOELICK ADDED THAT HE WAS WORKING ON LESS ORTHODOX WAYS OF PROMOTING SENSIBLE VIEWS IN GERMANY AS WELL. HE WANTED AMERICAN EMBASSIES IN EUROPE TO WORK WITH LOCAL SOCIALIST PARTIES IN ORDER TO COUNTER LEFT-WING SPD INFLUENCE AND EDUCATE THEM ABOUT THE VALUE OF NATO AND OF A CONTINUING US ROLE IN EUROPE. SIMILARLY IT WOULD BE IMPORTANT TO EDUCATE THE NEW GDR GOVERNMENT, AS A FUTURE PARTICIPANT IN 2 + 4, ON THE VIRTUES OF NATO MEMBERSHIP AS AGAINST NEUTRALITY. HE HOPED WE WOULD CONSIDER SIMILAR ACTION.

7. AS REGARDS SUBSTANCE, ZOELICK MADE TWO PRELIMINARY POINTS:

(A) APPLICABILITY OF ARTICLES 5 AND 6: HE SAID THAT IT WOULD BE MOST IMPORTANT FOR THE NATO TREATY AREA AND SECURITY GUARANTEE TO COVER ALL THE TERRITORY OF A UNITED GERMANY FROM THE OUTSET. OTHERWISE IT COULD LEAD ONLY TO TROUBLE AND INSTABILITY IN THE LONGER RUN. HE HOPED THAT IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO TAKE A FIRM STAND ON THE ISSUE.

(B) DENUCLEARISATION: HE CONFIRMED THAT AN ACTIVE PROCESS OF CONSIDERATION WAS CURRENTLY UNDER WAY WITHIN THE ADMINISTRATION ON WHETHER AND HOW BEST TO MODIFY NATO'S CURRENT SNF POSTURE AND STANCE ON SNF NEGOTIATIONS, IN ORDER TO PREVENT DENUCLEARISATION AND PRESERVE KEY CAPABILITIES, NOTABLY TASM. THE HANDLING OF CONGRESS OVER FOTL ALSO CAME

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INTO THE PICTURE. HE WAS WELL AWARE OF OUR REQUEST FOR SEPARATE BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS ON THESE ASPECTS AND THOUGHT THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD WISH TO CLARIFY ITS OWN THINKING A LITTLE FURTHER BEFORE DISCUSSING THE MATTER WITH US. BUT THE TIMESCALE WAS NEVERTHELESS PRETTY SHORT: HE ENVISAGED AN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS BY THE TIME OF THE PRESIDENT'S MEETING WITH THE PRIME MINISTER IN BERMUDA AND THOUGHT THAT A NEW SNF POLICY WOULD NEED TO BE AGREED BY THE KEY PLAYERS BEFORE THE NPG MEETING IN EARLY MAY. HE DID NOT EXPECT A US POSITION TO BE PUT TO SHEVARDNADZE DURING THE 4 - 6 APRIL TALKS.

8. THE DISCUSSION WAS CUT OFF AFTER 45 MINUTES WHEN ZOELICK WAS SUMMONED BY BAKER. HE SUGGESTED THAT WE CONTINUE EARLY NEXT WEEK, A MEETING SINCE ARRANGED FOR 2 APRIL.

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