

GRS 870

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FM WASHINGTON 212344Z JUN 85

TO PRIORITY FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 1934 OF 21 JUNE

INFO PRIORITY MOSCOW, UKDEL NATO, PARIS, BONN

INFO ROUTINE ROME, TOKYO, UKMIS NEW YORK

MOSCOW TEL NO 846: US/SOVIET RELATIONS

SUMMARY

1. AN EARLY SUMMIT NOW UNLIKELY. BUT THE PICTURE ON BILATERAL ISSUES NOT ALL BAD.

DETAIL

2. AT HIS 18 JUNE PRESS CONFERENCE PRESIDENT REAGAN, ASKED ABOUT THE LIKELIHOOD OF AN AUTUMN US/SOVIET SUMMIT, SAID QUOTE I HAVE TO BE OPTIMISTIC, AND THINK THERE WILL BE BEGIN SQUARE BRACKETS A SUMMIT END SQUARE BRACKETS... I ISSUED THE INVITATION ... AND THERE HAS BEEN EXPRESSIONS THAT THEY ARE WILLING TO HAVE SUCH A MEETING, AND DISCUSSIONS ARE GOING ON WITH REGARD TO TIME AND PLACE UNQUOTE. HOWEVER, WHITE HOUSE SPOKESMEN, ASKED ON 20 JUNE ABOUT REPORTS THAT DOBRYNIN THIS WEEK TOLD DR ARMAND HAMMER (IN MOSCOW) THAT GORBACHEV WOULD DEFINITELY NOT VISIT THE UNGA THIS AUTUMN, CONFIRMED THAT QUOTE THIS IS WHAT THE RUSSIANS HAVE BEEN TELLING US FOR THE PAST TWO OR THREE WEEKS UNQUOTE. BUT A SUMMIT LATER IN THE AUTUMN WAS NOT TO BE ABSOLUTELY EXCLUDED.

3. STATE DEPARTMENT CONTACTS THIS WEEK SAY THAT THEY NOW EXPECT GORBACHEV'S FIRST WESTERN VISIT TO BE TO PARIS, PROBABLY IN OCTOBER, PRESUMABLY TO REWARD AND ENCOURAGE THE FRENCH STANCE ON SDI. STATE ADD THAT THE RUSSIANS ARE STILL RESISTING THE IDEA THAT GORBACHEV'S FIRST MEETING WITH REAGAN SHOULD BE IN WASHINGTON. THEY HOWEVER CONFIRM THAT DISCUSSIONS ARE STILL CONTINUING.

4. STATE'S RATIONALISATION OF THE SITUATION IS THAT, AS HIS RECENT ACTIVITIES AND HIS 11 JUNE SPEECH (MOSCOW TEL NO 824) SHOW, ALL GORBACHEV'S MAIN CURRENT PRIORITIES ARE DOMESTIC, PRINCIPALLY ECONOMIC, BUT ALSO NO DOUBT INCLUDING GETTING HIS OWN PEOPLE IN PLACE BEFORE THE FEBRUARY 1986 PARTY CONGRESS. DURING THIS INITIAL PHASE MAJOR POLICY CHANGES ARE NOT TO BE EXPECTED. BOTH DOMESTICALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY, GORBACHEV COULD STILL MAKE POLITICAL MILEAGE OUT OF RELATIVELY SMALL MOVES AND GESTURES, AND SIMPLY BY BEING SEEN TO BE IN CHARGE AND DRIVING HARD. GIVEN THAT THE ORIGINAL PROPOSAL FOR A SUMMIT HAD COME FROM THE AMERICAN SIDE, THE RUSSIANS MIGHT HAVE CONCLUDED THAT REAGAN WOULD PAY A PRICE (PROBABLY ON THE ARMS CONTROL FIELD) FOR A MEETING. HOWEVER THE SHULTZ/GROMYKO MEETING IN VIENNA IN MAY, AND PROCEEDINGS IN GENEVA, WOULD HAVE DISABUSED THEM OF THAT IDEA. HENCE THE BACKTRACKING OVER SUMMIT TIMING.

5. STATE SAY THAT THE AGENDA FOR SHULTZ'S MEETING WITH GROMYKO IN HELSINKI HAS NOT YET BEEN DEFINED. THEY ASSUME THAT THERE WILL BE A FURTHER SHULTZ/GROMYKO MEETING AT THE UN, AND TELL US THAT GROMYKO HAS BEEN INVITED TO COME UP TO WASHINGTON THEREAFTER (AS IN 1984), BUT HAS NOT YET ACCEPTED.

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6. ON THE SUBSTANCE OF BILATERAL RELATIONS, THE EUROPEAN AND POL-MIL BUREAU IN STATE CONFIRM THAT THERE HAS BEEN NO SIGNIFICANT MOVEMENT ON THE SOVIET SIDE IN GENEVA (UKDEL NATO TELNO 169). NOR HAVE PRIVATE SOVIET RESPONSES TO THE PRESIDENT'S SALT II INTERIM RESTRAINTS DECISION BEEN ANY MORE POSITIVE THAN PRAVDA'S. ON THE OTHER HAND, SOVIET SCIENTISTS, (DURING MEETINGS IN MOSCOW EARLY THIS MONTH OF THE US AND SOVIET ACADEMIES OF SCIENCE), WHILE FOLLOWING THE PARTY LINE WITH ANTI-SDI TIRADES IN PLENARY SESSIONS, WERE UNPOLEMICAL IN PRIVATE (AND, INDEED, APPARENTLY PREPARED IN SOME CASES TO DISCUSS SOVIET STRATEGIC DEFENCE RESEARCH PROGRAMMES.)
7. IN THE AIR SAFETY TALKS, AGREEMENT HAS APPARENTLY BEEN REACHED ON THE MEASURES TO BE IMPLEMENTED, BUT THERE REMAIN PROBLEMS ON BOTH SIDES OVER THE CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH THEY WOULD BE IMPLEMENTED. TALKS ON RENEWAL OF AEROFLOT RIGHTS IN THE US AND FOR PAN AM IN THE SOVIET UNION ARE SAID TO BE MAKING PROGRESS, WITH THE RUSSIANS NOW OFFERING BETTER COMMERCIAL CONDITIONS TO PAN AM. DIFFERENCES OVER CULTURAL EXCHANGES WERE BEING NARROWED DOWN. OUR CONTACTS COULD NOT PREDICT, HOWEVER, WHEN ANY OF THESE AGREEMENTS WOULD COME TO FRUITION.
8. STATE CONFIRM PRESS REPORTS THAT THE RUSSIANS HAD (FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER) CALLED OFF THE ANNUAL NAVY-TO-NAVY TALKS UNDER THE 1972 INCIDENTS AT SEA AGREEMENT. THIS HAD FOLLOWED PENTAGON INSISTENCE, WITHOUT PRIOR CONSULTATION WITH STATE, THAT, IN THE WAKE OF THE NICHOLSON KILLING, SUCH TALKS THIS YEAR MUST BE STRICTLY BUSINESS-ORIENTED, WITH NO ACCOMPANYING COURTESIES OR SOCIAL PROGRAMME.
9. WE HAVE NO CONFIRMATION AS YET OF ANY NEW GORBACHEV/REAGAN MESSAGE.

WRIGHT

US/SOVIET ARMS CONTROL TALKS

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