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FM WASHINGTON

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELNO 1680

OF 290105Z JULY 92

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MY TELNO 1657: EC/WEC/NATO ENLARGEMENT

SUMMARY

1. A MORE FORTHCOMING STATE DEPARTMENT LINE. NILES THINKS US POSTS IN EUROPE SHOULD BE READY TO CONFIRM PRIVATELY THAT THE UNITED STATES WOULD WANT NEW WEU MEMBERS TO JOIN NATO. WOULD WE OBJECT?

DETAIL

2. THE MINISTER SAW NILES (ASSISTANT SECRETARY, STATE) ON 28 JULY TO FOLLOW UP THE BRAITHWAITE/WISNER TALKS LAST WEEK. MEYER NOTED THE RATHER SCEPTICAL TONE ADOPTED BY THE U.S. SIDE AT THOSE TALKS AND RECALLED THAT NILES HAD QUESTIONED THE NEED FOR ANY EARLY ACTION ON KEEPING WEU AND NATO MEMBERSHIP IN STEP.

3. NILES DENIED THAT THERE HAD BEEN U.S. SCEPTICISM ON THE NEED FOR ACTION, BUT AGREED THAT HE HAD INITIALLY DOUBTED WHETHER NOW WAS THE TIME TO MAKE A MOVE. HE HAD, HOWEVER, BEEN PERSUADED BY THE UK PRESENTATION. THEREFORE, IN SENDING AN ACCOUNT OF THE BRAITHWAITE/WISNER TALKS TO U.S. POSTS IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS, NILES WANTED TO AUTHORISE THEM TO EXPLAIN THE IMPORTANCE WHICH THE U.S. SAW IN CONGRUENCE BETWEEN WEU AND NATO MEMBERSHIP. THIS WOULD NOT INVOLVE PUBLIC STATEMENTS ONLY PRIVATE BRIEFING OF GOVERNMENTS IN ANSWER TO QUESTIONS. NILES DID NOT SAY WHICH U.S. POSTS MIGHT RECEIVE SUCH INSTRUCTIONS BUT SEEMED TO ENVISAGE EFTAN AS WELL AS NATO CAPITALS. HE THOUGHT THAT IT WOULD ALSO BE WORTH DOING SOME EARLY BRIEFING OF THE CANADIANS, AS THE OTHER NORTH AMERICAN MEMBER OF THE ALLIANCE.

4. WE WELCOMED ALL THIS, IF IT FITTED INTO THE AGREED STRATEGY OF

BUILDING UP AN ATMOSPHERE IN WHICH THE WEU/NATO LINK CAME TO SEEM INCREASINGLY NATURAL. NILES NEVERTHELESS ASKED US TO CHECK THAT THERE WOULD NOT BE WORRIES IN LONDON ABOUT U.S. POSTS TAKING SUCH A LINE.

COMMENT

5. NILES STRESSED THAT HE COULD NOT VOUCH FOR THE VIEWS OF OTHERS IN WASHINGTON. BUT SINCE HE HAS HITHERTO BEEN THE MOST SCEPTICAL SENIOR U.S. OFFICIAL ABOUT THE NEED FOR EARLY ACTION, THE INTER-AGENCY PROCESS IS QUITE LIKELY TO AGREE HIS PROPOSED INSTRUCTIONS TO U.S. POSTS. WE SHALL KEEP CLOSE TO THE AMERICANS ON THE PRECISE TERMS.

RENWICK

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