

GRS 555

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FM MOSCOW 010445Z JUL 83

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 712 OF 1 JUL 83

INFO IMMEDIATE UKDEL NATO,

INFO PRIORITY MODUK (DS17), BONN, ROME, OTTAWA, WASHINGTON, PARIS

UKDEL NATO'S TELS NOS 177 AND 179 (NOT TO ALL)

MESSAGES FROM ANDROPOV

1. THE ITALIAN EMBASSY HAVE CIRCULATED TO COMMUNITY COLLEAGUES THE FULL TEXT OF ANDROPOV'S MESSAGE TO THEIR PRIME MINISTER WHICH IS DATED 17 JUNE (OUR TRANSLATION OF THE RUSSIAN FOLLOWS BY TELELETTER TO FCO AND UKDEL NATO ONLY). THE LETTER ADDRESSES INF. IT CONTAINS NOTHING SUBSTANTIVELY NEW. BUT THERE ARE A NUMBER OF POINTS OF INTEREST, PARTICULARLY WHEN SET AGAINST THE RECENT WARSAW PACT STATEMENT (MY TELS NOS 699 AND 704).
2. THE LETTER THREATENS COUNTER-MOVES IF THE DEPLOYMENT OF AMERICAN MISSILES TAKES PLACE. THESE MOVES WOULD BE MADE 'INDIVIDUALLY AND TOGETHER WITH OUR ALLIES'. THE USE OF THE RUSSIAN WORD 'INDIVIDUALLY' IS STRIKING, BUT THIS IS NOT DESCRIBED AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO COLLECTIVE MEASURES. THE PHRASE THEREFORE PROBABLY REFERS TO NO MORE THAN THE RANGE OF MEASURES DESCRIBED IN THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT STATEMENT OF 28 MAY (MY TEL NO 556) COUNTER-DEPLOYMENTS AIMED AT US TERRITORY WOULD PRESUMABLY BE UNDERTAKEN 'INDIVIDUALLY' BY THE SOVIET UNION AND THOSE INVOLVING ADDITIONAL MISSILES IN EUROPE WOULD BE 'TOGETHER WITH OUR ALLIES'.
3. THE LETTER MORE THAN ONCE REFERS TO THE WILLIAMSBURG AND NATO MINISTERIAL MEETINGS AGAIN REFLECTING THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE RUSSIANS HAVE BEEN DISCONCERTED BY THEIR OUTCOME. ANDROPOV ALSO MENTIONS SHULTZ'S RECENT REMARKS, IN PARTICULAR HIS ATTEMPT TO LINK THE GENEVA NEGOTIATIONS WITH 'COMPLETELY ARTIFICIAL' AND UNRELATED QUESTIONS, AS FURTHER EVIDENCE THAT THE AMERICANS ARE TRYING TO BLOCK AGREEMENT THERE. THIS IS IN LINE WITH THE SOVIET PRESS COMMENT ON SHULTZ'S TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE (MY TEL NO 701).
4. ON THE BRITISH AND FRENCH DETERRENTS, THE LETTER SAYS THAT IN REFUSING TO TAKE THEM INTO ACCOUNT, 'THEY ARE ASKING US TO CLOSE OUR EYES TO HUNDREDS OF NATO NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVE CHARGES WHICH EXIST IN REALITY AND ARE TARGETTED ON US.' SUCH AN APPROACH TO THE NEGOTIATIONS COULD NEVER BE CALLED SERIOUS.

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/S. ANDROPOV

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5. ANDROPOV POURS COLD WATER ON THE 'THEISIS' ASCRIBED TO WASHINGTON THAT SERIOUS TALKS WILL ONLY BE POSSIBLE AFTER INF DEPLOYMENT (C.F. PARA 5 OF MY TELNO 704 ON THE MEETING OF WARSAW PACT LEADERS). 'TO ASSERT THAT THE SOVIET SIDE MIGHT BECOME MORE PLIANT, WHEN AMERICAN ROCKETS APPEAR IN WESTERN EUROPE, IS NOT ONLY SELF DECEPTION, BUT A PREMEDITATED ATTEMPT TO CONFUSE SOCIETY.'

6. THE CHOICE OF ADDRESSEE FOR THIS AND THE OTHER TWO LETTERS IS PERHAPS AS INTERESTING AS THE MESSAGE ITSELF. THE INF PRINCIPALS IN SOVIET EYES - U.S ., BRITAIN, FRANCE - HAVE BEEN LEFT OUT. THE LETTERS SHOULD THEREFORE BE CONSTRUED AS YET ANOTHER WEDGE-DRIVING EXERCISE AIMED AT NATO MEMBER STATES WHO FOR DIFFERENT REASONS MAY BE CONSIDERED TO BE VULNERABLE TO SOVIET PRESSURE.

7. IN TONE THE MESSAGE IS A MIXTURE OF MELODRAMA, THREAT, AND REASONABLENESS. IT IS PERHAPS THE KIND OF STATEMENT WHICH THE RUSSIANS WOULD HAVE LIKED THE PACT LEADERS TO ADOPT. BUT THE DATE AND SUCH INFORMATION AS IS AVAILABLE TO ME HERE TENDS TO CONFIRM MY ASSESSMENT THAT THE RUSSIANS DECIDED THAT THEY WOULD NOT FORCE THE ISSUE AT THE MEETING IN MOSCOW SOME TIME BEFORE 28 JUNE.

SUTHERLAND

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