

*per. disarmament/
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FM FCO 181555Z AUG

TO IMMEDIATE ATHENS

TELEGRAM NUMBER 270 OF 19 AUGUST

REPEATED FOR INFO TO IMMEDIATE BONN, PARIS, WASHINGTON, ROME,
UKDEL NATO, PRIORITY OSLO, ANKARA, OTTOWA, MOSCOW AND OTHER EC
POSTS

INF : GREEK PROPOSAL TO POSTPONE NATO DEPLOYMENT PROGRAMME

1. THE GREEK CHARGE DELIVERED ON 17 AUGUST A LETTER FROM HIS
FOREIGN MINISTER TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE, DATED 13 AUGUST
WHICH PROPOSES THE POSTPONEMENT OF THE DEPLOYMENT OF CRUISE AND
PERSHING II MISSILES FOR A SUGGESTED PERIOD OF SIX MONTHS IN
ORDER 'TO GIVE GENEVA NEGOTIATIONS THE BREATHING SPACE THEY
CERTAINLY NEED'. THE LETTER SUGGESTED THAT THE PROPOSAL MIGHT
BE DISCUSSED INFORMALLY AT THE NEXT POLITICAL CO-OPERATION
MEETING OF FOREIGN MINISTERS (12 SEPTEMBER).

2. ACTING HEAD OF DEFENCE DEPARTMENT TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY OF
A CALL ON 18 AUGUST BY THE CHARGE (ON ANOTHER MATTER) TO MAKE
THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

(A) THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S ABSENCE WOULD INVOLVE SOME DELAY
IN A REPLY BUT AT OFFICIAL LEVEL WE WERE GREATLY SURPRISED THAT
THE GREEKS SHOULD MAKE SUCH A PROPOSAL AND WERE FIRMLY OPPOSED
TO IT:

(B) PROSPECTS FOR SUCCESS IN THE GENEVA NEGOTIATIONS HAD ALWAYS
DEPENDDED ON THE RUSSIANS BEING CONVINCED THAT THE ALLIANCE WAS
DETERMINED TO STICK TO ITS 1979 DECISION INCLUDING THE
DEPLOYMENT SCHEDULE UNLESS PROGRESS AT THE NEGOTIATING TABLE
WARRANTED OTHERWISE:

(C) THUS POSTPONING DEPLOYMENTS WOULD CUT RIGHT ACROSS THE ARMS
CONTROL OBJECTIVES WE ALL SHARE BY UNDERMINING THE CREDIBILITY
OF THE ALLIANCE'S COMMITMENT TO THE 1979 DECISION:

(D) THE GREEK PROPOSAL, PARTICULARLY IF FOR ANY REASON IT BECAME
PUBLIC, WOULD ONLY SERVE TO INCREASE THE POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES
OF STATIONING COUNTRIES. IT WAS NOT EASY FOR US TO UNDERSTAND
WHY NON-STATIONING COUNTRIES SHOULD FIND IT NECESSARY TO ADD TO

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OUR PROBLEMS IN THIS WAY:

- (E) IT WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE FOR THE TEN TO DELIBERATE ON A PROPOSAL WHICH WOULD HAVE THE EFFECT OF RADICALLY ALTERING NATO POLICY. ANY DISCUSSION ON THIS SHOULD INCLUDE ALL ALLIES AND PARTICULARLY THE AMERICANS: NATO WAS THE OBVIOUS FORUM.
3. THE CHARGE UNDERTOOK TO REPORT THIS RESPONSE IMMEDIATELY TO ATHENS.
4. WE SHOULD NOT WISH YOU TO INITIATE FURTHER ACTION WITH THE GREEKS AT THE MOMENT BUT WOULD BE GRATEFUL IF YOU COULD FIND OUT WHICH OTHER FOREIGN MINISTERS HAVE BEEN SENT THIS MESSAGE.
5. THE FOLLOWING ACTION SHOULD BE TAKEN IN OTHER NATO REPEAT NATO CAPITALS:
- (A) TO DISCOVER WHICH OTHER ALLIES HAVE RECEIVED A SIMILAR MESSAGE FROM THE GREEKS (AS OF 17 AUGUST WE UNDERSTAND THE AMERICANS HAD NOT: IT SEEMED FROM A CONVERSATION WHICH BULLARD HAD WITH PFEFFER THAT THE GERMANS PROBABLY HAD):
- (B) TO INFORM THEM OF OUR INITIAL RESPONSE:
- (C) TO URGE WHERE NECESSARY THE IMPORTANCE OF DEALING WITH THE GREEK PROPOSAL PROMPTLY AND UNEQUIVOCALLY.
6. WE SHALL TAKE ACCOUNT OF RESPONSES IN DRAFTING A FORMAL REPLY TO THE GREEKS. THIS MAY NOT BE SENT UNTIL AFTER THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S RETURN AT THE BEGINNING OF SEPTEMBER.

WHITNEY

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