

Subject

Master ops

cc Bone (Fo) 53
Moffram (MOI)
Hatfield (CO)

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CAB/WH001/14

IMMEDIATE 141525Z SEP 83

SECRET

FROM THE PRIME MINISTER

TO PRESIDENT REAGAN

TELNO MISC 201 OF 14 SEPTEMBER 1983

DEAR RON,

PRIME MINISTER'S

PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL No. T131A/83

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR MESSAGE OF 10 SEPTEMBER ABOUT THE ALLIED APPROACH TO THE INF NEGOTIATIONS IN GENEVA. I AGREE ON THE IMPORTANCE OF ENSURING THAT OUR PEOPLES UNDERSTAND FULLY THE EFFORTS WE ARE MAKING TO ACHIEVE AGREEMENT IN GENEVA, PARTICULARLY NOW THAT INITIAL WESTERN DEPLOYMENTS ARE ABOUT TO BEGIN. I QUITE SEE THAT IT WILL BE USEFUL FOR AMBASSADOR NITZE IN THIS CONTEXT TO HAVE THE NECESSARY DISCRETION TO FILL OUT AND EXPLAIN OUR NEGOTIATING POSITION, WHILE REMAINING TRUE TO NATO'S FUNDAMENTAL NEGOTIATING PRINCIPLES.

I AM IN GENERAL VERY CONTENT WITH THE SUBSTANTIVE ELEMENTS OUTLINED IN YOUR MESSAGE FOR POSSIBLE ELABORATION OF THE WESTERN NEGOTIATING HAND. BUT I HOPE THAT IF IT COMES TO THE POINT OF INDICATING OUR READINESS TO CONSIDER PROPOSALS INVOLVING THE US AND SOVIET LRINF AIRCRAFT, THE ALLIED POSITION WILL MAKE CLEAR THAT WE ARE TALKING ABOUT (FOLLOWING WORD UNDERLINED) GLOBAL LIMITATIONS. NATO RIGHTLY ATTACHES PRIMACY TO GLOBAL LIMITS ON MISSILES (RATHER THAN PURELY REGIONAL LIMITS AS THE RUSSIANS WOULD PREFER) IF WESTERN SECURITY IS TO BE ENHANCED BY AN INF AGREEMENT. THE ARGUMENT SEEMS TO ME EVEN STRONGER IN RESPECT OF AIRCRAFT, SINCE THESE ARE BY DEFINITION THE MOST HIGHLY MOBILE WEAPONS PLATFORMS OF ALL.

IT IS PERHAPS MAINLY A TACTICAL QUESTION WHETHER TO INCLUDE ALL THESE ELEMENTS SIMULTANEOUSLY IN ONE ELABORATION OF THE WESTERN POSITION AT GENEVA, OR TO PROCEED IN PHASES DEPENDING ON SOVIET REACTIONS. IN THE LATTER CASE (FOR WHICH I HAVE SOME PREFERENCE) THERE MIGHT BE ADVANTAGE IN INTRODUCING OUR DETAILED POSITION ON AIRCRAFT (FOLLOWING WORD UNDERLINED) BEFORE GOING ON TO THE QUESTION OF SUB-CEILINGS ON MISSILES, SINCE THIS WOULD ENABLE US TO SECURE THE PRINCIPLE OF GLOBAL CEILINGS AT THE OUTSET. BUT I ACCEPT THAT YOU WILL WISH TO GIVE FULL WIEGHT TO AMBASSADOR NITZE'S RCOMMENDATIONS ON THIS SCORE.

I AM SURE THAT NATO HAS EVERYTHING TO GAIN BY REMAINING FIRM OVER THE BASIC CRITERIA AND PRINCIPLES EMBODIED IN THE ZERO/ZERO AND INTERIM AGREEMENT PROPOSALS. YOU MAY REST ASSURED OF OUR WHOLE-HEARTED SUPPORT IN THIS AND I WELCOME YOUR CONTINUED READINESS TO CONSULT CLOSELY WITH ALLIES ABOUT HOW BEST TO ACHIEVE OUR JOINT OBJECTIVES.

WITH BEST WISHES

YOURS EVER

MARGARET.