

PS
PS/LADY YOUNG
PS/MR LUCE
PS/PUS
SIR J BULLARD
MR WRIGHT
MR JAMES
MR CARTLEDGE

MR COLES ~~NO 10~~ DOWNING ST
MR BLELLOCH DUS(P) MOD
HD/DS17 MOD

HD/DEF DEPT
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RESIDENT CLERK



GRS 300
RESTRICTED
FM THE HAGUE 31115Z OCT 83
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELEGRAM NUMBER 312 OF 31 OCTOBER
INFO ROUTINE UKDEL NATO, WASHINGTON, BONN, ROME AND BRUSSELS

INF : DEMONSTRATION IN THE HAGUE

1. ON 29 OCTOBER A LARGE ANTI-NUCLEAR DEMONSTRATION WAS HELD IN THE HAGUE, REPRESENTING THE CLIMAX OF THE CAMPAIGN BY THE DUTCH "PEACE MOVEMENT" AGAINST INF DEPLOYMENT. ATTENDANCE (ESTIMATED BY THE POLICE AT 550,000) WAS EVEN HIGHER THAN GENERALLY ANTICIPATED, BUT THE MARCH TOOK PLACE WITHOUT ANY REPORTED VIOLENCE. THE WHOLE OCCASION HAD SOMETHING OF THE ATMOSPHERE OF A FAMILY DAY OUT.
2. PRINCESS IRENE (A YOUNGER SISTER OF QUEEN BEATRIX, WHO IS WELL KNOWN FOR HER LEFT-WING VIEWS AND HAS RENOUNCED HER CLAIM TO THE THRONE) MADE A SPEECH APPEALING FOR PEACE AND DISARMAMENT: THIS INEVITABLY RECEIVED MUCH ATTENTION IN THE MEDIA (CF MY TELEGRAM NO 255 ABOUT QUEEN BEATRIX'S VIEWS).
3. COMMENTING ON THE DEMONSTRATIONS, LUBBERS POINTED OUT THAT NATO EXISTED, INTER ALIA, PRECISELY TO DEFEND THE RIGHT OF PEOPLE TO EXPRESS THEIR VIEWS FREELY. HE ADDED THAT HE WAS DEPRESSED BY THE FACT THAT PEOPLE NO LONGER VIEWED THE ALLIANCE AS A "PEACE ORGANISATION" BUT RATHER AS A "THREAT".

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4. ASKED ABOUT THE IMPACT OF THE DEMONSTRATION FRINKING (DEFENCE SPOKESMAN FOR THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS (CDA) IN THE SECOND CHAMBER) SAID THAT THE POLITICAL ROOM FOR MANOEUVRE WITH REGARD TO INF DEPLOYMENT IN THE NETHERLANDS WAS GRADUALLY BECOMING MORE LIMITED. IN CONTRAST, LIBERAL SPOKESMEN HAVE STRESSED THAT 13.5 MILLION DUTCHMEN DID NOT DEMONSTRATE IN THE HAGUE AND THAT THE ONLY LIKELY EFFECT OF SATURDAY'S EVENTS WOULD BE TO REDUCE THE CHANCES OF A NEGOTIATED AGREEMENT IN GENEVA.

COMMENT

5. THE DEMONSTRATION WAS STRIKINGLY WELL ORGANISED AND PEACEFUL, AND PERFECT WEATHER ENSURED A LARGE TURNOUT. ALTHOUGH ITS POLITICAL EFFECT HAD TO SOME EXTENT BEEN DISCOUNTED IN ADVANCE, THE DEMONSTRATION CAN ONLY HAVE MADE THE CDA'S DELICATE BALANCING ACT MORE DIFFICULT AND HAVE INCREASED THE PRESSURE ON WAVERING PARLIAMENTARIANS TO OPPOSE DEPLOYMENT IN THE NETHERLANDS. THE GENERAL VIEW OF THE LOCAL MEDIA IS THAT IT WAS AN IMPRESSIVE DISPLAY OF WIDESPREAD AND GENUINE CONCERN.

CHAPMAN

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