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FM UKDEL WILLIAMSBURG 292050Z MAY 83
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELEGRAM NUMBER 007 OF 29 MAY

PLEASE ADVANCE FCO NEWS DEPT, OJD, NUMBER 10 AND COI.

ITEM : UK DENIES NEUTRON SHELL REQUEST.

BY JOHN BARROWS, LPS CHIEF ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT
WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA (LPS): AN AMERICAN PRESS REPORT THAT
BRITAIN HAS ASKED THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT TO DEVELOP A
NEUTRON ARTILLERY SHELL FOR DEPLOYMENT IN EUROPE WAS STRONGLY
DENIED BY A BRITISH SPOKESMAN TODAY 29 MAY.

AN OFFICIAL OF THE FOREIGN OFFICE, SPEAKING TO JOURNALISTS
ATTENDING THE WESTERN ECONOMIC SUMMIT MEETING HERE, REBUTTED
THE ARTICLE IN TODAY'S WASHINGTON POST WHICH MADE THE CLAIM.

'THERE HAS BEEN NO PROPOSAL FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENHANCED
RADIATION WEAPONS IN EUROPE. THE STORY THAT THE BRITISH
GOVERNMENT HAS ASKED THE U.S. GOVERNMENT TO PRODUCE A NEUTRON
WEAPON SHELL HAS NO BASIS IN FACT,' HE DECLARED.

THE OFFICIAL SAID THE U.S. WEAPON DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME WAS,
OF COURSE, ENTIRELY A MATTER FOR THE U.S. GOVERNMENT. 'AS
FAR AS DEPLOYMENT IS CONCERNED'. HE CONTINUED 'BRITAIN HAS
NEITHER MADE NOR RECEIVED ANY REQUEST FOR THE DEPLOYMENT OF
ENHANCED RADIATION WARHEADS IN EUROPE.'

ASKED WHETHER THE NATO (NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANISATION)
COUNTRIES HAD NOT PUT FORWARD SUCH A PROPOSAL AS A JOINT VENTURE,
THE OFFICIAL REPLIED THAT THEY HAD NOT.

'PART OF THE ROOT OF THE MISUNDERSTANDING IN THE ARTICLE IS
PROBABLY BECAUSE THERE HAVE BEEN DISCUSSIONS IN NATO ABOUT A
155 MILLIMETRE NON-NEUTRON NUCLEAR SHELL', HE ADDED.

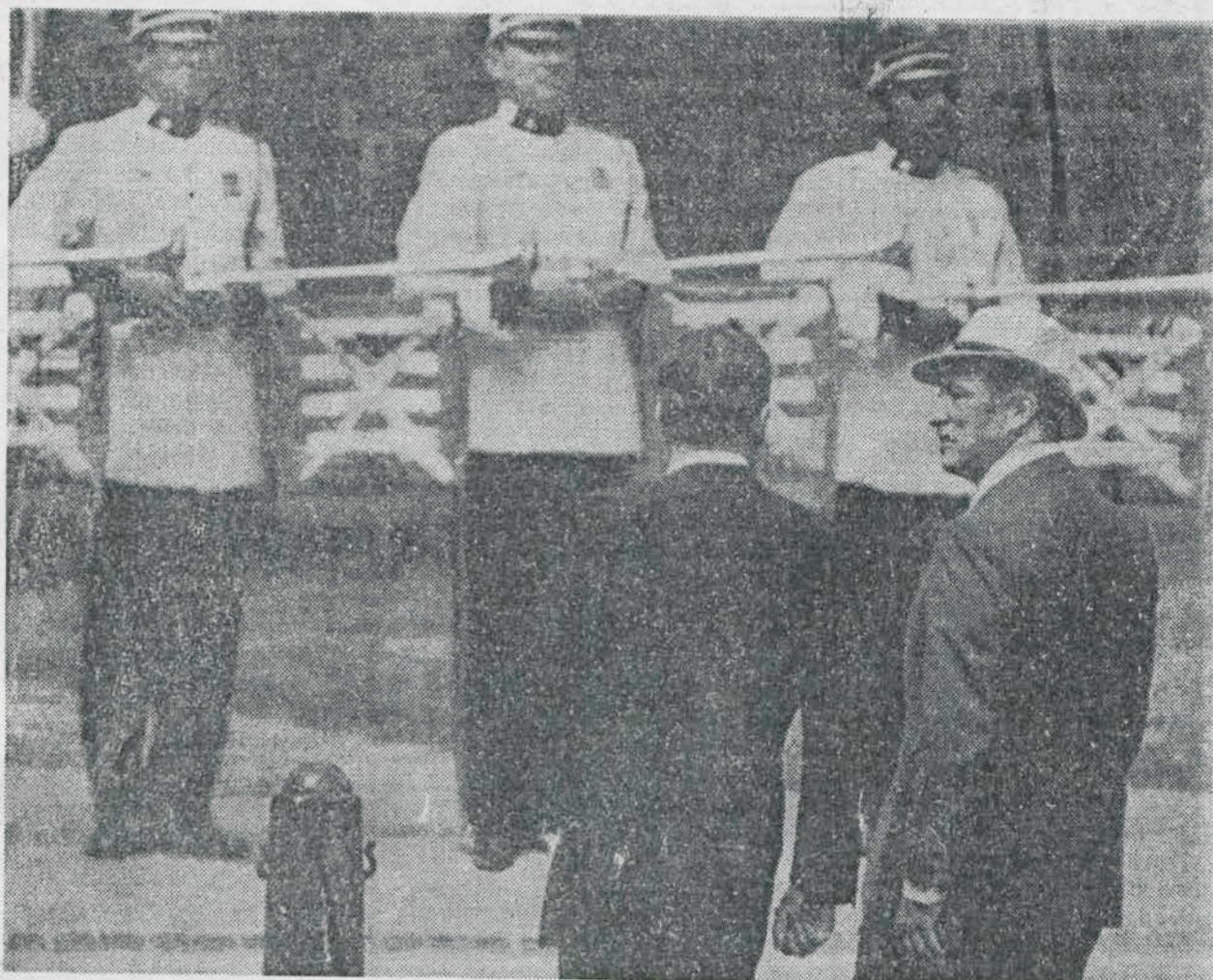
SYNONYMOUSLY WITH THE BRITISH STATEMENT, FOREIGN MINISTERS OF THE
SEVEN SUMMIT COUNTRIES WERE HAVING A WIDE-RANGING DISCUSSION ON
ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT AND CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE
SOVIET UNION, PARTICULARLY ON INTERMEDIATE RANGE NUCLEAR FORCES IN
EUROPE. A JOINT STATEMENT ON THESE ISSUES MAY BE ISSUED LATER BY THE
SEVEN. (LPS)

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PSE MAKE THAT DESKBY 292130Z ET OBLIGE

becoming partly sunny, high near 75, chance of showers late tonight, low in the low 60s. Monday—Partly sunny, high in the 70s. Yesterday—AQI: 40; temp. range: 72-54. Details on Page B2.



By James M. Thresher—The Washington Post

President Reagan greets Canada's Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, whose arrival was marked by playing of controversial music.

Britain, West Germany and Italy

Europeans Request Neutron Weapon

By Walter Pincus
Washington Post Staff Writer

Britain, West Germany and Italy, which have publicly refused deployment of U.S. neutron weapons on their soil, have asked the United States to produce a new 155-mm neutron artillery shell, according to testimony given Congress earlier this year.

The three European allies want the United States to build this smallest of the controversial new generation of short-range, battlefield

nuclear weapons so that the FH70 cannon being developed by the three "can be nuclear-capable," according to Herman E. Roser, assistant secretary of energy for the nuclear weapons-building program.

A declassified transcript of his remarks on March 8 in a closed session of a House Appropriations subcommittee was released last week.

A congressional source said Friday that the Reagan administration has been telling Congress recently that the three nations "are depending on

us to come forward" with the new nuclear shell "because the old 155-mm [nuclear] shells don't fit in their new cannon."

The three now have older, U.S.-made guns that can fire the almost 20-year-old 155-mm nuclear shells stockpiled in Europe. The warheads are under control of U.S. Army custodial teams and cannot be turned over to other nations for use without

See NEUTRON, A21, Col. 1

United States reacts briskly to Soviet missile threat. Page A19

New 155-mm Neutron Artillery Shell Requested by Three European Allies

NEUTRON, From A1

specific authority from the president of the United States.

Under NATO agreements, the United States will not release nuclear warheads for use in Europe without permission of the nation from which the warheads would be fired.

Neutron weapons are small hydrogen bombs that produce radiation as their primary kill mechanism, theoretically causing less damage away from the immediate battlefield than older nuclear shells whose main energy output involves blast and heat.

As with other neutron weapons, the Europeans want the new shells stored in the United States until the military situation requires them, or the political situation allows them to be transported to Europe, according to government sources.

The administration is launching a new push for congressional approval of the 155-mm shell, the third type of neutron weapon and one it plans to acquire in the largest numbers. Of the first two types, both rejected by the three allies, about 300 Lance missile warheads have been built and stored, and production of about 1,000 8-inch neutron shells is under way.

Last week, the Office of Management and Budget sent congressional Appropriations committees an

amendment to the fiscal 1984 budget request adding \$47.5 million to help prepare for production of the 155-mm shell. In its letter, according to congressional sources, the OMB said the neutron shell is being produced "for eventual deployment in Europe."

For the last two years, Congress has turned down production funds. One sticking point has been the cost—more than \$1 million apiece—and another is growing congressional opposition to short-range battlefield systems that Europeans do not want stored or used on their territory.

The buildup of new short-range neutron weapons comes as NATO is preparing to announce a unilateral reduction in its European stockpile of more than 6,000 older nuclear battlefield weapons.

After four years of study, a NATO defense subcommittee recommended that as many as 1,000 stockpiled nuclear anti-aircraft warheads and atomic demolition munitions be retired. In addition, the group is studying ways to reduce the almost 3,000 155-mm and 8-inch nuclear shells in Europe.

Short-range, neutron battlefield weapons are one part of NATO's controversial nuclear modernization program. The other weapons are the U.S. medium-range Pershing II and

ground-launched cruise missiles. Deployment of both is to begin in western Europe in December.

These missiles, which could hit targets in the Soviet Union from bases in Britain, West Germany and Italy, have drawn vocal opposition and threats from the Soviet Union. But they also have induced the Soviets to negotiate on eliminating or limiting them.

Neutron weapons, although the object of Soviet propaganda since 1977, never have appeared to bother Moscow seriously. An offer in 1978 by President Carter to halt neutron production in return for Soviet tank reductions in Europe never drew a direct response.

Last week, the House Appropriations Committee, anticipating the OMB letter, added the \$47.5 million to the Energy Department's fiscal 1984 appropriations bill. The Senate Appropriations Committee, which has deleted the money for the 155-mm neutron shell for two years, has not acted on OMB's request.

Although proponents of neutron weapons say that these arms would be less destructive than currently deployed nuclear shells in western Europe, European public opinion has been strongly opposed to them.

We're really sorry, but...

Due to overwhelming consumer demand for our new Model #12394 13" color television we are currently in short supply and must take orders. This item will be advertised this week. Expected arrival will be no later than July 15. Unfortunately, Model #12394 will appear again in ad sections already printed. Orders already placed, or placed now, will be honored first at our advertised sale price of 329.99.

