

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMCONSUL MUNICH
USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 064938

BAKER FOR VALDES

FOLLOWING TELEGRAM FROM SECSTATE WASHDC DATED APRIL 1, 1974
SENT ACTION ROME, BELGRADE, ZAGREB IS REPEATED TO YOU:
QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 064938

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, IT, YU

SUBJECT: PRESS GUIDANCE ON US SHIP VISIT TO TRIESTE

1. DEPARTMENT PRESS OFFICE GIVEN FOLLOWING CONTINGENCY
PRESS GUIDANCE CONCERNING DARK IMAGE AND SUBSEQUENT US
SHIP VISIT TO TRIESTE. DEPARTMENT WILL USE ON AN "IF
ASKED" BASIS ONLY. ISSUE NOT RAISED IN APRIL 1 NOON PRESS
BRIEFING. FOLLOWING IS FOR POSTS' INFORMATION.

2. BEGIN QUOTE:

SUBJECT: CONTINGENCY PRESS GUIDANCE/NATO EXERCISE IN
NORTHERN ADRIATIC

BACKGROUND

FOLLOWING AN ITALIAN MARCH 11 PROTEST OF YUGOSLAV BORDER
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SIGNS IN ZONE B, BELGRADE REACTED VEHEMENTLY AND ACCUSED

ROME OF QUESTIONING YUGOSLAVIA'S TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY. THE GOY MOUNTED A PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN ON THE TRIESTE/ ZONE B ISSUE WHICH, FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE 1954, HAS APPRECIABLY HEIGHTENED TENSIONS IN THE AREA. THE PRESENT STATUS QUO IN THE AREA WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1954 WHEN THE LONDON MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (SIGNATORIES: ITALY, YUGOSLAVIA, US AND UK) PROVIDED FOR GOI AND GOY CIVIL

ADMINISTRATION OF ZONE A AND ZONE B OF THE NEVER-FORMED "FREE TERRITORY OF TRIESTE" RESPECTIVELY.

THE US CONTINUES TO ADHERE TO THE POSITION PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED IN 1954 -- WE WILL "GIVE NO SUPPORT TO CLAIMS OF EITHER YUGOSLAVIA OR ITALY TO TERRITORY UNDER THE SOVEREIGNTY OR ADMINISTRATION OF THE OTHER."

A LONG-PLANNED NATO EXERCISE (DARK IMAGE 74) IS TAKING PLACE FROM MARCH 29-APRIL 5 IN NORTHERN ITALY ON THE GULF OF TRIESTE. THE NATO FORCE INCLUDES EIGHT US NAVY VESSELS (5 AMPHIBIOUS LANDING SHIPS, A REPAIR SHIP, AN OILER AND A PATROL GUNBOAT) AND 1,700 US MARINES. AFTER THE MANEUVERS, FIVE OF THE EIGHT SHIPS PLAN PORT CALLS WITH SHORE LEAVE AT TRIESTE. TWO AMPHIBIOUS SHIPS CARRYING APPROXIMATELY 800 MARINES, AND A SUPPORT VESSEL, WILL VISIT TRIESTE APRIL 6-17. THE REPAIR SHIP AND THE PATROL GUNBOAT WILL BE THERE APRIL 4-9.

(ON AN IF ASKED BASIS ONLY)

Q: ARE US FORCES CURRENTLY PARTICIPATING IN A MILITARY EXERCISE IN THE TRIESTE AREA?

A: NO, NOT IN THE TRIESTE AREA. US AND ITALIAN FORCES ARE ENGAGED IN A LONG-PLANNED SMALL-SCALE NATO AMPHIBIOUS EXERCISE IN NORTHEAST ITALY IN THE VICINITY OF THE TAGLIAMENTO RIVER. THE EXERCISE, CALLED DARK IMAGE 74, BEGAN MARCH 29 AND ENDS APRIL 5.

Q: IS THE EXERCISE RELATED TO THE RENEWED ITALIAN-YUGOSLAV DISPUTE OVER TRIESTE?

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A. NO. THE "DARK IMAGE" EXERCISE HAD BEEN SCHEDULED MANY MONTHS IN ADVANCE. SIMILAR NATO AMPHIBIOUS EXERCISES HAVE BEEN CONDUCTED IN PAST YEARS IN THE AREA.

Q: WHAT IS THE US POSITION ON THE TRIESTE ZONE B DISPUTE?

A: WE CONTINUE TO ADHERE TO THE POSITION WE HAVE TAKEN SINCE

1954 WHEN THE LONDON MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING REGARDING THE FREE TERRITORY OF TRIESTE WAS SIGNED BY ITALY, YUGOSLAVIA, THE UK AND THE US. IN A PRESS RELEASE OF OCTOBER 5, 1954, WE SAID:

"THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT TAKES THIS OPPORTUNITY TO DECLARE IT WILL GIVE NO SUPPORT TO CLAIMS OF EITHER YUGOSLAVIA OR ITALY TO TERRITORY UNDER THE SOVEREIGNTY

OR ADMINISTRATION OF THE OTHER."

Q: BUT AREN'T US MARINES AND NAVY PERSONNEL GOING TO TRIESTE ALSO?

A: AFTER THE MANEUVERS ARE COMPLETED, THERE ARE LONG-STANDING PLANS TO ALLOW SOME US UNITS TO HAVE SHORE LEAVE IN TRIESTE. A REPAIR SHIP AND A PATROL GUNBOAT WILL VISIT TRIESTE APRIL 4-9 AND TWO AMPHIBIOUS SHIPS CARRYING APPROXIMATELY 800 US MARINES AND A SUPPORT VESSEL WILL VISIT FROM APRIL 6-17.

Q: IF WE HAVE PUBLICLY MAINTAINED WE WILL TAKE NO SIDES IN THE DISPUTE, WHY ARE WE SENDING MARINES TO TRIESTE?

A: SIXTH FLEET SHIP VISITS, INCLUDING SHORE LEAVE IN TRIESTE AND VISITS TO YUGOSLAV PORTS, HAVE BEEN ROUTINE OVER THE PAST MANY YEARS. OUR POSITION REGARDING THE DISPUTE IS WELL KNOWN TO BOTH THE YUGOSLAVS AND ITALIANS. ROUTINE SHORE LEAVE IN TRIESTE IS NOT AN ISSUE HERE.

Q: HOW OR WHY DID THIS RECENT ITALIAN-YUGOSLAV DISPUTE BEGIN? WHY IS IT CONTINUING?

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A: I WOULD REFER YOU TO SPOKESMEN FOR THE TWO NATIONS FOR THEIR EXPLANATIONS. WE HAVE EXPRESSED OUR HOPE AND CONFIDENCE THAT THE TWO NEIGHBORS WILL RESOLVE THE CURRENT ISSUE THROUGH FRIENDLY AND CONSTRUCTIVE BILATERAL TALKS.

Q: YUGOSLAVIA CLAIMS THAT THE US, THE UK AND FRANCE HAVE INTERPRETED THE 1954 MEMORANDUM TO GIVE FULL YUGOSLAV SOVEREIGNTY OVER ZONE B. HAVE YOU?

A: OUR POSITION IS AS STATED ABOVE: WE GIVE NO SUPPORT TO THE CLAIMS OF EITHER PARTY TO TERRITORY UNDER THE SOVEREIGNTY OR ADMINISTRATION OF THE OTHER.

(FYI: DO NOT DEVIATE FROM THE ABOVE FORMULATION, AS THE QUESTION OF JURIDICAL CLAIMS AND SOVEREIGNTY IN THE

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