

OO FCO (DESKBY 0930Z/17)

PP WASHINGTON

PP MOSCOW

PP UKDEL NATO

QRS 350

CONFIDENTIAL

DESKBY FCO 170930Z

FM BELGRADE 170915Z JAN 87

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 23 OF 17/1/87

AND TO PRIORITY WASHINGTON, MOSCOW AND UKDEL NATO AND SAVING
TO ZAGREB

MY TEL NO 20: PRESIDENT TITO'S HEALTH.

1. AN ANNOUNCEMENT WAS ISSUED AT MID-DAY 16 JANUARY THAT PRESIDENT TITO HAD IN THE PAST DAY NOT SUFFERED ANY FURTHER DIFFICULTY AND THAT HIS CONDITION WAS ON THE WHOLE BETTER.
2. THE INDICATIONS ARE THAT ATTEMPTS ARE BEING MADE TO STABILISE THE PRESIDENT'S CONDITION AND TO ENABLE HIM TO RECOVER FROM HIS FIRST OPERATION BEFORE CONSIDERATION IS GIVEN TO ANY FURTHER OPERATION. IT IS A GOOD SIGN THAT THE MEDICAL BULLETINS WHICH HAVE BEEN ISSUING TWICE A DAY AS HIS CONDITION WORSENERD HAVE NOW DROPPED TO ONE A DAY AGAIN. BUT HIS BASIC CIRCULATORY PROBLEM STILL REMAINS. STANE BOLANC TOLD MY DUTCH COLLEAGUE ON 16 JANUARY THAT THE PRESIDENT WAS NOW BETTER AFTER HIS OPERATION BUT "THERE WAS OF COURSE THE QUESTION OF HIS AGE".
3. INFORMATION IS COMING IN THAT THE JOINT PRESIDENCIES OF THE FEDERATION AND THE LCY HAVE GONE INTO PERMANENT SESSION SINCE THE MORNING OF 16 JANUARY. A USUALLY RELIABLE YUGOSLAV SOURCE HAS SAID THAT BAKARIC HAS BEEN MADE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL CONTINGENCY PLANNING, WHICH MIGHT WELL FALL NATURALLY TO HIM IN HIS CAPACITY AS PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERAL COUNCIL FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER. OTHER YUGOSLAV JOURNALIST SOURCES SAY THAT BAKARIC WILL UNDOUBTEDLY PLAY A LEADING ROLE IN FUTURE EVENTS. HE COMMANDS WIDESPREAD RESPECT AND AUTHORITY IN THE LCY AND HE SEEMS TO BE ENJOYING MUCH BETTER HEALTH THAN FOR MANY YEARS PAST.

ADVANCE COPY

IMMEDIATE

DESKBY

EESD

PS / ~~NO~~ 10 A Str.

PS / S9.5

PS / M: Blakev

PUS

M: Dullard

M: Fergusson

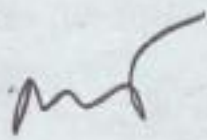
m

IN THE LCY AND HE SEEMS TO BE ENJOYING MUCH BETTER HEALTH THAN FOR MANY YEARS PAST.

4. STANE DOLANC ALSO TOLD MY DUTCH COLLEAGUE THAT HE FELT CONFIDENT ABOUT THE FUTURE, SAW NO LIKELIHOOD OF ANY SOVIET ADVENTURE IN THIS DIRECTION, AND THAT YUGOSLAVIA HAD NO CONCRETE EVIDENCE OF ANY SUCH INTENTION. NEVERTHELESS THE RUMOURS IN WARSAW TEL NO 19 ARE CIRCULATING HERE. APART FROM THE LOW-LEVEL STATE OF ALERT REPORTED IN MY TUR THERE ARE NO OVERT SIGNS THAT WE CAN DETECT OF ANY SPECIAL CONCERN IN THIS REGARD.

5. MY GENERAL ASSESSMENT IS THAT THE MAIN BODIES OF STATE - THE PRESIDIUM LCY AND THE FEDERAL PRESIDENCY - ARE ALREADY BEGINNING TO ACT OUT THEIR LONG PREPARED ROLES ON THE ASSUMPTION OF EITHER THE PRESIDENT'S INCAPACITATION FOR SOME WHILE OR HIS IMPENDING DEATH. I HAVE NO REASON AT PRESENT FOR BELIEVING THAT THIS PROCESS IS PROCEEDING OTHER THAN SMOOTHLY, DESPITE THE HASTE OF BRINGING THE MACHINERY INTO ACTION ONCE IT HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED THAT THE PRESIDENT'S OPERATION HAD BEEN UNSUCCESSFUL. THE MOST RECENT JIC ASSESSMENT STILL HOLDS GOOD.

FARQUHARSON



NNNN

0144