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TO IMMEDIATE FCO

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AND TO INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON, BONN, PARIS, UKDEL NATO, MODUK,  
UKDEL VIENNA, UKDIS GENEVA, UKDEL CSCE STOCKHOLM.

PRIORITY OTHER NATO POSTS, EAST EUROPEAN POSTS, TOKYO.

INFO SAVING ULAN BATOR, PEKING.

FOLLOWING FROM PRIVATE SECRETARY.

SECRETARY OF STATE'S VISIT TO MOSCOW : FIRST SESSION OF TALKS  
WITH GROMYKO.

SUMMARY.

1. THE SECRETARY OF STATE STRESSED THE SINCERE DESIRE OF THE WEST, INCLUDING, MOST IMPORTANTLY, PRESIDENT REAGAN, FOR BETTER EAST/WEST RELATIONS IN THE INTEREST OF PRESERVING PEACE AND SECURITY AT THE LOWEST POSSIBLE LEVEL OF FORCES. A LONG, STERILE MONOLOGUE FROM GROMYKO ON THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF DOING BUSINESS WITH THE PRESENT US ADMINISTRATION, WHOSE DEEDS SPOKE LOUDER THAN WORDS. HIS TONE WAS RESTRAINED, IN MARKED CONTRAST TO HIS SPEECH WHICH FOLLOWED - SEE MY TELNO B) SESSION CONCLUDED WITH THE SECRETARY OF STATE RAISING OUR CONCERNS OVER POLAND AND HUMAN RIGHTS. (GROMYKO DID NOT RESPOND, BUT COULD WELL DO SO WHEN TALKS RESUME ON 3 JULY).

DETAIL.

2. INVITED TO OPEN WHAT GROMYKO SAID HE HOPED WOULD BE A 'BUSINESSLIKE' EXCHANGE, THE SECRETARY OF STATE SAID THE WESTERN ALLIES HAD DEVOTED MUCH TIME TO CONSIDERATION OF HOW BETTER MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING COULD BE ESTABLISHED IN THE LONGER-TERM, ON A BASIS OF RESPECT FOR LEGITIMATE MUTUAL SECURITY CONCERNS, THERE WAS A COMMON EAST/WEST INTEREST IN THE SEARCH FOR STABILITY AND SECURITY AT THE LOWEST POSSIBLE LEVEL OF FORCES. THIS WAS ESSENTIAL BOTH BECAUSE OF THE RISKS INHERENT IN THE PRESENT SITUATION AND BECAUSE OF THE ECONOMIC BURDENS IMPOSED BY GROWING MILITARY SPENDING. ECHOES OF THESE OBJECTIVES WERE ALSO TO BE FOUND IN STATEMENTS BY THE SOVIET UNION AND ITS PARTNERS, SO WAYS MUST BE FOUND TO OVERCOME MISTRUST AND MAKE PROGRESS PROVIDE THEM. BOTH HMG AND THE US ADMINISTRATION WERE WHOLLY SINCERE IN THEIR DESIRE FOR IMPROVED RELATIONS AND BETTER ARMS CONTROL, ESPECIALLY IN THE NUCLEAR FIELD.

3. IN A MONOLOGUE LASTING SOME EIGHTY MINUTES, GROMYKO DIFFERED AS TO THE CAUSES OF THE PRESENT COMPLICATED AND DANGEROUS SITUATION. AGREEMENTS SERVING THE CAUSE OF PEACE HAD BEEN POSSIBLE WITH CARTER. BUT FROM THE DATE IT TOOK OFFICE, IT WAS CLEAR THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION WAS BENT ON UNDOING PREVIOUS ACHIEVEMENTS. 56343 WERE 'DOZENS' OF AGREEMENTS NOW IN ABEYANCE OR WITHOUT MEANING,

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EVEN THOUGH FORMALLY STILL IN FORCE. THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP HAD AT ONCE UNDERSTOOD THAT IT COULD NOT DO BUSINESS WITH REAGAN. IT HAD NONETHELESS PATIENTLY PUT FORWARD MANY PROPOSALS, BOTH BILATERALLY AND IN MULTILATERAL FORA : ALL WERE 'RELENTLESSLY' REJECTED. IT WAS RIGHT TO STRESS BOTH THE DANGER AND THE ECONOMIC COST OF THE ARMS RACE WHICH DAMAGED ALL, ESPECIALLY THE MAJOR STATES WHO HAD TO CONDUCT IT, EVEN IF, LIKE THE SOVIET UNION, OUT OF NECESSITY. THE UK SHOULD RUB IN THESE CONSEQUENCES WITH ITS AMERICAN ALLIES.

4. THERE WERE NO GROUNDS TO TRUST REAGAN'S SINCERITY, EXCEPT IN HIS 'CRUSADE AGAINST SOCIALISM'. THE TEST WAS DEEDS RATHER THAN WORDS : DEEDS SUCH AS THE ABANDONING OF SALT 2, THE REFUSAL TO ACCEPT THE PRINCIPLE OF EQUALITY AND EQUAL SECURITY AS THE ONLY BASIS FOR SERIOUS DISCUSSION OF EAST/WEST AND US/SOVIET RELATIONS, AND THE REFUSAL TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT UK AND FRENCH SYSTEMS IN THE INF ARITHMETIC. AFTER A LONG DIGRESSION ABOUT US NUCLEAR SYSTEMS BASED ON AIRCRAFT CARRIERS, PARTICULARLY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN, GROMYKO TURNED TO THE LATEST EXCHANGES ABOUT ARMS CONTROL IN OUTER SPACE. IN RESPONSE TO THE SOVIET PROPOSAL, THE AMERICANS HAD SHOWN THEY DID NOT WISH TO HOLD TALKS ON THE NON-MILITARISATION OF SPACE. THEIR OBSTRUCTIONIST LINK WITH THE GENEVA TALKS, BOTH INTERMEDIATE RANGE AND STRATEGIC, WAS A 'CHEAP DEVICE' INTENDED TO CONFUSE. THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP HAD MANY TIMES STATED AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL ITS ATTACHMENT TO AN IMPROVEMENT IN EAST/WEST RELATIONS AND THE UK SHOULD IMPRESS UPON ITS AMERICAN ALLIES THE TERRIBLE CONSEQUENCES FOR EUROPE AND THE WORLD OF A NUCLEAR CONFLAGRATION.

5. IN THE BRIEF REMAINING TIME, THE SECRETARY OF STATE URGED DISCUSSION AND NEGOTIATION AS THE ONLY WAY TO BRIDGE THE GAP. THE SOVIET ABSENCE FROM THE INF AND START STILL CAUSED SURPRISE IN THE WEST AND THE SOVIET UNION SHOULD RETURN TO THE TABLE. THE SOVIET ATTITUDE ON ARMS IN SPACE WAS ALSO SURPRISING : THEY HAD ASKED FOR A RAPID RESPONSE TO THEIR PROPOSAL AND, WHEN IT CAME, DISMISSED IT AS 'HASTY'. THE US HAD NOT ATTACHED CONDITIONS AND THE SOVIET SIDE SHOULD, AS THE AMERICANS SUGGESTED, PURSUE THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS AGREEMENT TO OPENING TALKS IN SEPTEMBER : THAT WAS THE TRUE TEST OF SINCERITY.

6. HE HAD PREVIOUSLY MADE CLEAR HMG'S POSITION ON UK STRATEGIC NUCLEAR SYSTEMS. HE URGED SOVIET CONSIDERATION OF WESTERN PROPOSALS ON CHEMICAL WEAPONS, AND IN THE MBFR. AS REGARDS THE CDE AT STOCKHOLM, THERE WERE TWO PROBLEMS RENDERING PROGRESS DIFFICULT - POLAND, WHERE DIALOGUE AND MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE WERE STILL LACKING, AND HUMAN RIGHTS. QUOTING THE RELEVANT PASSAGE FROM THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT, THE SECRETARY OF STATE SAID ALL SHADES OF OPINION IN THE UK FELT STRONGLY ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS CASES (HE INSTANCED THE SAKHAROV'S,

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/KORYAGIN.

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KORYAGIN, SHCHARANSKY AND YAKUNIN), WHICH COULD NOT BUT AFFECT  
ANGLO/SOVIET RELATIONS. GROMYKO DID NOT RESPOND BUT SUGGESTED  
THAT TALKS SHOULD CONTINUE TOMORROW ON "REMAINING INTERNATIONAL  
QUESTIONS" AND BILATERAL MATTERS.

SUTHERLAND.

Repetition to REYKJAVIK  
referred for departmental decision.  
repeated as requested to other posts.

FCO(PALACE)/WHITEHALL  
SOVIET D

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