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TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELNO 859 OF 22/12

RPTD INFO PRIORITY TO WASHINGTON AND UKDEL NATO.

- Defence*
1. GROMYKO'S SPEECH AT THE LUNCH FOR THE VISITING PRESIDENT OF ANGOLA INCLUDED THE FIRST HIGH LEVEL SOVIET STATEMENT ON TNF. GROMYKO SAID HE HAD BEEN ASKED TO SPEAK BY BREZHNEV, WHO WAS UNABLE TO ATTCCD BECAUSE OF A 'CATARRHAL INDISPOSITION'.
 2. AFTER AN INTRODUCTORY PASSAGE PRAISING SOVIET-ANGOLAN RELATIONS AND SOVIET POLICIES TOWARDS AFRICA GROMYKO CONTINUED BY SAYING THE USSR OPPOSED ANY INCREASE IN THE ARMS RACE AND SUPPORTED PEACEFUL COOPERATION BETWEEN STATES. THE SOVIET UNION HAD RECENTLY MADE PROPSALS FOR IMPROVING PEACE AND SECURITY IN EUROPE, AND DEMONSTRATED ITS GOODWILL IN A PRACTICAL MANNER. NATO HAD ANSWERED BY DECIDING TO TURN THE FRG, BRITAIN AND ITALY INTO LAUNCHING PADS FOR NEW US NUCLEAR ROCKETS, DIRECTED AGAINST THE USSR AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE WARSAW PACT, WHILE THE US GOVERNMENT HAD PROCLAIMED AN UNPRECEDENTED PROGRAMME OF DEFENCE SPENDING COVERING MANY YEARS AHEAD. THIS WAS A CHALLENGE TO THE DESIRE OF ALL PEOPLE FOR PEACE, AND FLOUTED THE VITAL INTERESTS OF MANY COUNTRIES OF EUROPE, INCLUDING MEMBERS OF NATO. " WE CANNOT BUT NOTE THAT THE MOST ACTIVE ROLE IN REALISING THESE FATEFUL NATO PLANS HAS BEEN CARRIED OUT BY THOSE WHOSE ARMIES, WITHIN THE MEMORY OF OUR GENERATION, WERE USED FOR AGGRESSION AGAINST MANY EUROPEAN COUNTRIES SOWING DEATH AND DESTRUCTION OVER THE WHOLE CONTINENT."
 3. NATO'S DECISION, GROMYKO SAID, WAS AN ATTEMPT TO UPSET THE BALANCE OF FORCES IN EUROPE , RECENTLY ACKNOWLEDGED AS EXISTING BY CARTER AMONG OTHERS. 8% "THIS DECISION FURTHER MEANS THAT THE LEADERS OF NATO PREFERRED NOT TO RESPOND TO OUR CALL FOR RESPONSIBILITY AND A START TO HONEST NEGOTIATIONS, BUT TO CUT THE GROUND FROM UNDER SUCH NEGOTIATIONS AND DESTROY THEIR

/VERY BASIS."

VERY BASIS." IT WAS A DELUSION TO THINK ONE COULD TALK TO THE SOVIET UNION FROM A "POSITION OF STRENGTH". NATO WOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO ESTABLISH MILITARY SUPERIORITY. THE RUSSIANS AND THEIR ALLIES WOULD TAKE CARE OF THEIR SECURITY, BUT DID NOT WANT TO BALANCE "ON THE EDGE OF WAR". "AS BEFORE, WE CONSIDER OUR PRINCIPAL TASK THE STRUGGLE FOR A SECURE PEACE AND DETENTE, AGAINST THE PLANS OF AGRESSIVE-MILITARIST FORCES".

4. GROMYKO REFERRED TO THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT AND SAID THE TIME HAD COME TO SAY A DECISIVE 'NO' TO THOSE PUSHING FOR AN INCREASE IN THE ARMS RACE. THOSE IN FAVOUR OF PEACEFUL CO-OPERATION AND AGAINST THE COLD WAR NEEDED TO WORK TOGETHER BY REAL MEASURES TO CUT ARMS EXPENDITURE. THEY OPPOSED "FEVERISH REARMAMENT COVERED UP BY HYPOCRITICAL CALL FOR 'NEGOTIATIONS' UNDER CONDITIONS DICTATED BY THE OTHER SIDE"

KEEBLE

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