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FM UKDEL NATO 221515Z OCT 81

TO IMMEDIATE FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE,

TELEGRAM NUMBER 375 OF 22 OCTOBER 1981,

INFO PRIORITY UKDEL CANCON (FOR PRIVATE SECRETARY), WASHINGTON,
MOSCOW, BONN, PARIS.

BREZHNEV MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT REAGAN.

1. BENNETT (US) INFORMED THE COUNCIL TODAY OF THE MAIN POINTS IN A LETTER FROM BREZHNEV HANDED OVER BY DOBRYNIN IN WASHINGTON ON 16 OCTOBER, IN REPLY TO REAGAN'S LETTER OF 22 SEPTEMBER TO BREZHNEV (TEXT IN UKMIS NEW YORK TELNO 884 TO FCO OF 22 SEPTEMBER).

2. BENNETT SAID THAT BREZHNEV'S LETTER PREDICTABLY REJECTED MANY OF THE CHARGES IN REAGAN'S LETTER, BUT WAS RELATIVELY RESTRAINED IN ITS OVERALL TONE, AND SEEMED INTENDED TO CONVEY MOSCOW'S DESIRE FOR A MORE BUSINESSLIKE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE U S.

3. THE MAIN POINTS OF THE LETTER, AS SET OUT BY BENNETT WERE AS FOLLOWS:
QUOTE.

BREZHNEV ACKNOWLEDGES THE PRESIDENT'S EXPRESSION OF INTEREST IN A MORE STABLE AND CONSTRUCTIVE RELATIONSHIP, HIS COMMITMENT TO A U S - SOVIET DIALOGUE, AND HIS SUPPORT FOR ARMS CONTROL. HE ASSERTS, OF COURSE, THAT THESE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN SOVIET GOALS AS WELL.

BREZHNEV CHARACTERIZES THE RESULTS OF THE HAIG/GROMYKO MEETINGS AS POSITIVE QUOTE IN A CERTAIN SENSE UNQUOTE, POINTING TO THE AGREEMENT TO BEGIN NEGOTIATIONS ON QUOTE NUCLEAR ARMS IN EUROPE UNQUOTE AS THE MAIN POSITIVE ELEMENT. HE ARGUES THAT U S AND SOVIET INTERESTS COULD BE ADVANCED BY THE TNF TALKS.

HE ALSO NOTES THAT THE QUOTE MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION UNQUOTE, THE CONTINUATION OF STRATEGIC ARMS NEGOTIATIONS, REMAINS OPEN. THIS MAKES CLEAR THAT, FOR THE SOVIETS, SALT REMAINS A KEY LITMUS TEST OF U S INTEREST IN IMPROVED U S - SOVIET RELATIONS.

BREZHNEV, AS COULD BE EXPECTED, REJECTS PRESIDENT REAGAN'S SUGGESTION THAT SOVIET POLICY IS THE OBSTACLE TO IMPROVED RELATIONS AND REDUCED INTERNATIONAL TENSIONS, AND HE REPEATS THE STANDARD DENUNCIATION OF LINKAGE AS A RECIPE FOR DEADLOCK IN EAST-WEST RELATIONS.

NOTING THAT THE USSR HAS MANY OBJECTIONS TO U S POLICY, BREZHNEV SUGGESTS THAT THE SIDES ESCHEW MUTUAL RECRIMINATIONS AND CURTAIL THE PUBLIC POLEMICS, IN FAVOUR OF A QUOTE QUIET, BUSINESS-LIKE UNQUOTE AND QUOTE RESPECTFUL UNQUOTE DIALOGUE.

BREZHNEV GOES ON AT LENGTH IN DECRYING THE QUOTE DOUBLE STANDARD UNQUOTE WHICH HE ALLEGES UNDERLIES OUR CALL FOR RESTRAINT AND MUTUAL RESPECT OF EACH OTHER'S INTERESTS.

HE QUESTIONS WHETHER U S INTERESTS ARE SERIOUSLY THREATENED BY CUBA'S ACTIONS OR BY VIETNAM'S OCCUPATION OF KAMPUCHEA. BUT HE DOES NOT, INTERESTINGLY, DISPUTE THE PRESIDENT'S WARNING OF THE THREAT TO EAST-WEST RELATIONS OF POSSIBLE SOVIET INTERVENTION IN POLAND (RESPONDING, INSTEAD, WITH SILENCE). THE LETTER, IN GENERAL, REFLECTS A CERTAIN SOVIET DEFENSIVENESS OVER CUBA.

HE TRIES TO TURN OUR LOGIC OF RESTRAINT BACK ON US BY REPEATING THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT'S PROPAGANDISTIC CHARGE THAT PURPORTED U S QUOTE PRESSURE UNQUOTE ON EGYPT IS A DIRECT THREAT TO SOVIET INTERESTS.

BREZHNEV QUESTIONS HOW THE PRESIDENT'S STRATEGIC FORCE MODERNIZATION DECISIONS SQUARE WITH OUR CALLS FOR RESTRAINT, AND THREATENS THAT MOSCOW WILL RESPOND TO U S PROGRAMS.

BREZHNEV ALSO TAKES GREAT PAINS TO CONVINCING US THAT THE USSR DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT NUCLEAR WAR IS WINNABLE, POINTING TO HIS OWN PUBLIC STATEMENTS ON THIS SCORE, AND TO THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS TO EDUCATE THE SOVIET PEOPLE IN THIS SPIRIT.

WHILE AVOWING THE SOVIET COMMITMENT TO NEGOTIATED SOLUTIONS OF REGIONAL CONFLICTS, BREZHNEV OFFERS ONLY THE AFGHAN GOVERNMENT'S WARMED-OVER PROPOSALS BY WAY OF EXAMPLE.
UNQUOTE.

4. BENNETT SUMMED UP BY SAYING THAT BREZHNEV'S RESPONSE COULD ONLY BE DESCRIBED AS MIXED. WHILE THE SOVIETS SEEMED TO HAVE UNDERSTOOD THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE THAT THE UNITED STATES WAS SINCERELY INTERESTED IN A MORE STABLE AND CONSTRUCTIVE US-SOVIET RELATIONSHIP, THEY WERE INSISTING, AS A MATTER OF PRINCIPLE, THAT THEY WOULD NOT FUNDAMENTALLY ALTER THEIR BEHAVIOUR TO OBTAIN IMPROVED TIES. THIS LINE WAS, OF COURSE, TO BE EXPECTED. BUT AS HAIG MADE CLEAR TO GROMYKO, THEY WERE NOT LOOKING TO HUMILIATE THE SOVIET UNION, BUT WERE SEEKING RESTRAINT IN ITS FOREIGN POLICY. THEY WERE LOOKING FOR SPECIFIC PROGRESS ON SPECIFIC PROBLEMS. THEY HAD AN AGENDA AND THE SOVIETS KNEW WHAT IT WAS. THE REAL TEST OF SOVIET READINESS TO WORK FOR IMPROVED RELATIONS WOULD BE IN SOVIET ACTIONS, NOT WORDS, ON THAT AGENDA OVER THE COMING MONTHS.

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BURNING BUSH
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FM FCO 231530Z SEP 81
TO IMMEDIATE UKMIS NEW YORK
TELEGRAM NUMBER 558 OF 23 SEPTEMBER
INFO IMMEDIATE UKDEL NATO,
INFO PRIORITY WASHINGTON, PARIS, BONN, MOSCOW.

FOR PRIVATE SECRETARY FROM APS
YOUR TELNOS 883 AND 884: REAGAN'S MESSAGE TO BREZHNEV
1. WE HAVE BEEN CONSIDERING REAGAN'S LETTER IN THE LIGHT
OF US REQUESTS FOR SUPPORTING ACTION BY THE ALLIES, MOST
RECENTLY REPEATED BY EAGLEBURGER IN THE NATO COUNCIL ON 16
SEPTEMBER AND BY STREATOR IN HIS LETTER OF 22 SEPTEMBER
CONVEYING THE TEXT OF REAGAN'S LETTER TO YOU HERE.
2. THE LETTER IS A SKILFULLY BALANCED PRESENTATION OF US
READINESS TO BEGIN A CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE WITH THE SOVIET
UNION COMBINED WITH A CALL FOR SOVIET ACCEPTANCE OF THE NEED
FOR MORE RESPONSIBLE INTERNATIONAL BEHAVIOUR. THE FORCEFUL
STATEMENT OF THE MAIN REASONS FOR INSTABILITY IN INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS IS PREFACED BY AN EXPRESSION OF INTEREST IN
CONSTRUCTIVE US/SOVIET RELATIONS AND THE SAME THEME IS REPEATED
IN THE TWO CONCLUDING PARAGRAPHS. BILATERAL ISSUES, NOTABLY
ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS, ARE PRESENTED IN A POSITIVE LIGHT
WITH THE EMPHASIS ON GENUINE REDUCTIONS. MULTILATERAL ISSUES
CONTAIN WHAT THE RUSSIANS WILL SEE AS MAXIMALIST DEMANDS ON
AFGHANISTAN AND CAMBODIA. BUT LINKAGE IS IMPLIED RATHER THAN
STATED. NO PRECONDITIONS ARE SET FOR A BEGINNING TO THE SEARCH

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FOR BETTER US/SOVIET RELATIONS AND THE MESSAGE ENDS WITH A COMMITMENT AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL TO DISCUSSIONS ON THE WHOLE RANGE OF BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL ISSUES.

3. WHILE TOUGH IN SUBSTANCE, THE RUSSIANS ARE LIKELY TO REGARD THIS MESSAGE AS MORE CONSTRUCTIVE THAN ANY WHICH THE US ADMINISTRATION HAS YET SENT THEM. IT IS CLEARLY INSPIRED BY THE SAME LINE OF THOUGHT AS THAT IN HAIG'S RECENT SPEECHES.

4. THERE IS NOTHING IN THE LETTER WHICH WE COULD NOT SUPPORT. ITS MAIN THEMES ARE THOSE WHICH WE HAVE BEEN EMPHASISING FOR SOME TIME.

5. AS FOR SUPPORTING ACTION, THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S GENERAL ASSEMBLY SPEECH HAS ALREADY GIVEN GOOD EXPOSURE TO OUR ROLE AS EC PRESIDENCY, AND THE SPEECH ITSELF IS CONSISTENT WITH THE REAGAN LINE. IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO STAND PAT ON THAT. SOME ALLIES MIGHT INDEED ARGUE THAT THERE IS LITTLE REASON TO LAUNCH A MAJOR HIGH LEVEL MESSAGE WRITING EXERCISE FROM EUROPE AT THIS JUNCTURE OTHER THAN THAT OF RESPONDING TO THE US REQUEST FOR SUPPORT. IF, HOWEVER, IT IS DECIDED THAT SUPPORTING ACTION WOULD ON BALANCE BE APPROPRIATE, NOT LEAST BECAUSE IT COULD BE HELPFUL IN THE POLISH CONTEXT (MOSCOW TELNO 587 NOT TO ALL) THERE ARE THREE ALTERNATIVES, EACH OF WHICH HAS PROCEDURAL AND PRACTICAL DIFFICULTIES.

6. SUPPORTING LETTERS COULD TAKE THE FORM OF

- A) COORDINATED MESSAGES FROM ALL MEMBERS OF NATO:
- B) MESSAGES BY INDIVIDUAL HEADS OF STATE OR GOVERNMENT:
- C) A MESSAGE FROM UK ON BEHALF OF THE TEN.

7. THE MAIN POINT OF THIS EXERCISE IS TO DEMONSTRATE SUPPORT FOR THE AMERICANS AND UNITY VIS-A-VIS THE RUSSIANS. IT WOULD BE PREFERABLE IF ALL OR AT LEAST MOST OF EITHER THE TEN OR NATO WERE TO SEND MESSAGES. WHILE IT SHOULD ONLY BE NECESSARY TO COORDINATE THEMES IN NATO A COMMON TEXT WOULD HAVE TO BE AGREED BY THE TEN. WE THINK IT UNLIKELY THAT THE FRENC WOULD AGREE TO SEND A LETTER ON THEIR OWN ACCOUNT NOW THAT THE AMERICANS HAVE PUBLICISED THEIRS. WHAT, HOWEVER, WE SHOULD AVOID AT ALL COSTS IS THE UK ACTING ALONE OR WITH SUPPORT ONLY OF A FEW MINOR NATO PARTNERS. IF AFTER DISCUS-

SIONS IN THE ALLIANCE SOME BUT NOT ALL MEMBERS DECIDED TO SEND LETTERS, THE AMERICANS WOULD HAVE BEEN TREATED TO A DISPLAY OF QUALIFIED SUPPORT AND DIVISIONS BETWEEN THE ALLIES WOULD PROBABLY BECOME PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE.

8. THE FRENCH MIGHT, HOWEVER, AGREE TO A MESSAGE FROM THE TEN WHICH WOULD IN ANY CASE HAVE GREATER WEIGHT THAN A SERIES OF SEPARATE MESSAGES. A PRESIDENCY MESSAGE ON THE WIDE RANGE OF SUBJECTS COVERED IN THE REAGAN LETTER WOULD BE A USEFUL DEMONSTRATION OF POCO IN ACTION. BUT IT WILL BY NO MEANS BE EASY TO AGREE A TEXT WITHIN THE TEN, AND TO MEET IRISH SUSCEPTIBILITIES THE TEN MESSAGE WOULD PROBABLY HAVE TO CONCENTRATE ON POLITICAL (AFGHANISTAN, CAMBODIA, CSCE, ETC) RATHER THAN POLITICO-MILITARY ISSUES. A LETTER ON BEHALF OF THE TEN WOULD NOT NECESSARILY PRECLUDE OTHER NON-TEN MEMBERS OF NATO SENDING BROADLY SIMILAR MESSAGES IF THEY SO WISHED.

9. OUR INCLINATION IS THEREFORE TO GO FOR A MESSAGE FROM THE TEN. FOLLOWING LAST NIGHT'S DINNER YOU MAY HAVE MORE UP TO DATE IMPRESSIONS OF THE LIKELIHOOD OF THE TEN AGREEING. THE SUBJECT MAY ALSO COME UP AT THIS EVENING'S DINNER OF FOREIGN MINISTERS.

10. THIS TELEGRAM AND TEXT OF REAGAN'S MESSAGE ARE BEING COPIED TO NUMBER TEN. WHEN WE HAVE THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S VIEWS ON THE ABOVE, WE SHALL PREPARE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PRIME MINISTER.

CARRINGTON

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FM UKMIS NEW YORK 221334Z SEP 81

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 884 OF 22 OF SEPTEMBER 1981

INFO IMMEDIATE MOSCOW PRIORITY BONN, PARIS, UKDEL NATO.

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1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF MESSAGE.

(from Pres Reagan to N. Bushnev)

AS WE BEGIN THE FALL SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND APPROACH THE MEETINGS BETWEEN OUR FOREIGN MINISTERS, I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR ME TO DESCRIBE TO YOU SOME OF MY THOUGHTS ON THE FUTURE DIRECTION OF U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS.

LET ME SAY AT THE OUTSET THAT THE UNITED STATES IS VITALLY INTERESTED IN THE PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF INTERNATIONAL TENSIONS AND IN A MORE CONSTRUCTIVE AND STABLE RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR COUNTRY. I AM OF COURSE CONCERNED BY THE SITUATION IN POLAND, AS I AM SURE YOU ARE. IT IS A SITUATION WHICH CAN ONLY BE DEALT WITH BY THE POLES THEMSELVES. ANY OTHER APPROACH WOULD HAVE SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES FOR US ALL. BUT THE UNITED STATES COMMITMENT TO PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF TENSIONS EXTENDS FAR BEYOND POLAND. WE HAVE REPEATEDLY DEMONSTRATED OUR WILLINGNESS TO SETTLE DISAGREEMENTS BY NEGOTIATIONS AND TO OBSERVE SCRUPULOUSLY OUR INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS.

I BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT A GREAT DEAL OF THE PRESENT TENSION IN THE WORLD IS DUE TO ACTIONS BY THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT. AS WE AND OUR ALLIES HAVE REPEATEDLY STATED, TWO ASPECTS OF SOVIET BEHAVIOR ARE OF PARTICULAR CONCERN TO US:

—FIRST, THE SOVIET UNION'S PURSUIT OF UNILATERAL ADVANTAGE IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE GLOBE AND ITS REPEATED RESORT TO THE DIRECT AND INDIRECT USE OF FORCE IN REGIONAL CONFLICTS. THE ROLE OF CUBA IN AFRICA AND LATIN AMERICA IS PARTICULARLY DISTURBING AND UNACCEPTABLE TO US.

—SECOND, THE USSR'S UNREMITTING AND COMPREHENSIVE MILITARY BUILDUP OVER THE PAST 15 YEARS, A BUILDUP WHICH IN OUR VIEW FAR EXCEEDS PURELY DEFENSIVE REQUIREMENTS AND CARRIES DISTURBING IMPLICATIONS OF A SEARCH FOR MILITARY SUPERIORITY.

DESPITE THESE TRENDS, WE ARE COMMITTED TO A DIALOGUE WITH THE SOVIET UNION. WE ARE DEEPLY CONCERNED OVER THE THREAT TO MANKIND IN THE AGE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS. I HAVE STATED PUBLICLY THAT THE UNITED STATES IS READY TO ENGAGE IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE USSR THAT WOULD LEAD TO GENUINE ARMS REDUCTIONS. THE EXISTING STOCKPILES OF THESE WEAPONS AND ONGOING PROGRAMS ARE SUCH THAT ONLY A SERIOUS EFFORT AT ARMS REDUCTIONS WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO THE OBJECTIVE WHICH WE BOTH SHARE, NAMELY, LIFTING THE THREAT OF NUCLEAR ANNIHILATION WHICH HANGS OVER MANKIND.

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WHILE THE UNITED STATES IS COMMITTED TO A STABLE AND PEACEFUL WORLD, IT WILL NEVER ACCEPT A POSITION OF STRATEGIC DISADVANTAGE. BECAUSE THE SOVIET UNION HAS, OVER THE PAST YEARS, EMBARKED ON A MAJOR PROGRAM TO IMPROVE ITS STRATEGIC FORCES, THE UNITED STATES MUST ALSO UPGRADE ITS FORCES. WE HAVE NO DESIRE TO TAX OUR SOCIETIES WITH A COSTLY, BURDENSOME, AND DANGEROUS BUILD-UP OF ARMAMENTS. THE UNITED STATES, HOWEVER, WILL INVEST WHATEVER IS NEEDED TO MAINTAIN A SECURE STRATEGIC POSTURE.

THE MEETINGS THIS MONTH BETWEEN OUR FOREIGN MINISTERS WILL, I ASSUME, SET THE TIME AND PLACE FOR NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES ON WHAT WE TERM "THEATER NUCLEAR FORCES." WE ARE DEEPLY COMMITTED TO ACHIEVING A MILITARY BALANCE IN THIS AREA — A BALANCE WHICH HAS BEEN UPSET BY THE UNPRECEDENTED BUILDUP OF MILITARY FORCES BY YOUR COUNTRY IN RECENT YEARS, ESPECIALLY THE DEPLOYMENT OF THE SS-20 MISSILES. FURTHERMORE, AS WE HAVE STATED AT THE MADRID MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE, WE ARE PREPARED TO PARTICIPATE IN NEGOTIATIONS TO FASHION A COHERENT SYSTEM OF COMMITMENTS ON EUROPEAN SECURITY THAT ARE VERIFIABLE AND MILITARILY SIGNIFICANT.

WITH OUR ALLIES AND OTHER CONCERNED NATIONS, THE UNITED STATES IS WILLING TO PURSUE NEGOTIATED SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEMS THAT THREATEN WORLD PEACE, INCLUDING THE PRESENCE OF OCCUPATION FORCES IN AFGHANISTAN AND KAMPUCHEA. SOVIET READINESS TO RESOLVE THE AFGHANISTAN PROBLEM ON THE BASIS OF A PROMPT WITHDRAWAL WOULD GO FAR TOWARD RESTORING THE INTERNATIONAL CONFIDENCE AND TRUST NECESSARY FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF EAST-WEST RELATIONS. THE VIETNAMESE INVASION AND OCCUPATION OF KAMPUCHEA HAS EARNED WIDESPREAD CONDEMNATION FROM THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AS A BREACH OF ACCEPTED NORMS OF CONDUCT AND A THREAT TO PEACE. I CALL ON YOUR GOVERNMENT TO EXERT ITS INFLUENCE OVER THE GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM TO WITHDRAW ITS TROOPS FROM KAPUCHEA.

IN SUM, THE UNITED STATES IS MORE INTERESTED IN ACTIONS WHICH FURTHER THE CAUSE OF WORLD PEACE THAN IN WORDS. WE ARE FULLY COMMITTED TO SOLVING OUTSTANDING DIFFERENCES BY PEACEFUL MEANS, BUT WE ARE NOT WILLING TO ACCEPT DOUBLE STANDARDS OF INTERNATIONAL BEHAVIOR. WORDS AND PUBLIC STATEMENTS ARE, HOWEVER, IMPORTANT. A MAJOR CONTRIBUTION TO THE REDUCTION OF WORLD TENSIONS WOULD BE FOR YOUR COUNTRY TO CURB THE ESCALATING CAMPAIGN OF ANTI-AMERICANISM AND DISINFORMATION BOTH INSIDE THE SOVIET UNION AND ABROAD, A CAMPAIGN WHICH ONLY SERVES TO POISON THE POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE.

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/ MR. PRESIDENT

S E C R E T

MR. PRESIDENT, MY COUNTRY STANDS READY TO BEGIN THE SEARCH FOR A BETTER U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONSHIP. WE ARE PREPARED TO DISCUSS WITH THE SOVIET UNION THE FULL RANGE OF ISSUES WHICH DIVIDE US, TO SEEK SIGNIFICANT, VERIFIABLE REDUCTIONS IN NUCLEAR WEAPONS, TO EXPAND TRADE, AND TO INCREASE CONTACTS AT ALL LEVELS OF OUR SOCIETIES. I AM HOPEFUL THAT THE MEETINGS BETWEEN SECRETARY OF STATE HAIG AND FOREIGN MINISTER GROMYKO WILL START A PROCESS LEADING TOWARD SUCH A RELATIONSHIP.

FOR SUCH A PROCESS TO BEAR FRUIT, YOUR COUNTRY MUST UNDERSTAND THE NEED FOR GREATER RESTRAINT IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA. AT THE SAME TIME, LET ME ADD THAT THE UNITED STATES IS FULLY PREPARED TO TAKE YOUR INTERESTS INTO ACCOUNT, IF YOU ARE PREPARED TO DO THE SAME WITH OURS. IF WE CAN SUCCEED IN ESTABLISHING A FRAMEWORK OF MUTUAL RESPECT FOR EACH OTHER'S INTERESTS AND MUTUAL RESTRAINT IN THE RESOLUTION OF INTERNATIONAL CRISES, I THINK WE WILL HAVE CREATED A MUCH MORE SOLID AND ENDURING BASIS FOR U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS THAN WE HAVE EVER HAD BEFORE.

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