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This says in effect that the Russians will develop their own SDI if necessary.

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FM FCO
TO IMMEDIATE UKDEL NASSAU
TELNO 69
OF 211445Z OCT

FOLLOWING TELEGRAM NOW REPEATED TO YOU AT REQUEST OF PRIVATE OFFICE WAS RECEIVED FROM MOSCOW TELEGRAM NO 1388 OF 21 OCT 85.

FOR PRIME MINISTERS PARTY AND PS OF S OF S.

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FM MOSCOW
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELNO 1388
OF 210915Z OCTOBER 85
INFO PRIORITY WASHINGTON, PARIS, BONN, UKDEL NATO, MODUK (DACU)
INFO SAVING TOKYO, HELSINKI

MARSHAL AKHROMEEV ON SOVIET ARMS CONTROL PROPOSALS

SUMMARY

1. MARSHAL AKHROMEEV, CHIEF OF THE GENERAL STAFF AND FIRST DEPUTY DEFENCE MINISTER, GAVE AN EXTENSIVE AND DETAILED ACCOUNT, IN PRAVDA ON 19 OCTOBER, OF THE SOVIET STANCE ON SDI AND THE ABM TREATY. HE RAISED THE PROSPECT OF SOVIET SPACE-BASED DEFENCE, WHILE DENYING ANY PRESENT PROGRAMME ANALOGOUS TO SDI. HE CRITICISED THE US INTERPRETATION OF THE ABM TREATY IN SOME DETAIL AND COMMENTED HARSHLY ON US PREPARATIONS FOR THE SUMMIT.

DETAIL

2. BESIDES A RESUME OF SOVIET ARMS CONTROL PROPOSALS AND PREVIOUSLY STATED SOVIET POSITIONS ON THE STRATEGIC BALANCE, INCLUDING FIGURES, AKHROMEEV COVERED THE FOLLOWING THEMES:

A) US REACTION TO PROPOSALS:

- THE PROCESS HAD BEGUN OF ''FALSIFICATION AND PUBLIC DISCREDITING''. WASHINGTON'S ASSERTION THAT THE SOVIET PROPOSALS MIGHT BE A STARTING POINT WAS ONLY FOR APPEARANCE'S SAKE. THE ADMINISTRATION WERE TRYING TO REJECT NOT THE DETAILS BUT THE ESSENCE.

B) SDI

- THE US HAD CATEGORICALLY REJECTED A BAN ON THE CREATION AND DEPLOYMENT OF SPACE STRIKE WEAPONS. BUT A GRADUAL TRANSITION FORM OFFENSIVE NUCLEAR TO DEFENSIVE NON-NUCLEAR SYSTEMS WAS A ''FALSE CONCEPT'' DESIGNED TO CONCEAL AGGRESSIVE INTENTIONS.

- A BAN ON ''SPACE STRIKE WEAPONS'' WAS THE KEY ISSUE. WITHOUT IT THERE WOULD BE AN UNCONTROLLED STRATEGIC NUCLEAR AND SPACE ARMS RACE. THE SOVIET UNION COULD NOT BE NAIVE AND COUNT ONLY ON US PEACEFUL ASSERTIONS. IF THE CREATION OF SPACE STRIKE WEAPONS WAS CONTINUED, ''NOTHING WILL REMAIN BUT TO TAKE COUNTER-MEASURES INRRHE FIELD OF BOTH OFFENSIVE AND OTHER, NOT EXCLUDING DEFENSIVE, ARMAMENTS, INCLUDING THOSE BASED IN SPACE''. WASHINGTON UNDER-ESTIMATED SOVIET POTENTIAL. AS GORBACHEV HAD SAID, THERE WOULD BE NO AMERICAN MONOPOLY IN SPACE.

- THE US CLAIMED THAT THE SOVIET UNION HAD ALREADY VIRTUALLY CREATED AN ABM DEFENCE. THIS WAS A DECEPTION. ''THE SOVIET UNION IS NOT ENGAGED IN DEVELOPING, AND CONSEQENTLY, IN TESTING ANY TYPES OF SPACE WEAPONS WHATSOEVER. WE HAVE NO PROGRAMME OF CREATING SPACE STRIKE WEAPONS AND NO STAR WARS PLANS ANALOGOUS TO THE AMERICANS.''

C) INTERPRETATION OF ADMT:

- THE NEW US INTERPRETATIONS (MACFARLANE ON 6 OCTOBER AND THE CONFIDENTIAL PENTAGON STUDY) WERE A ''DELIBERATE DECEIT''. AGREED STATEMENT D ALLOWED RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND TESTING OF ABM SYSTEMS OR COMPONENTS BASED ON OTHER PHYSICAL PRINCIPLES UNDER THE STRICT LIMITS DEFINED BY THE TREATY AND ''ONLY USING PERMANENT GROUND-BASED ABM SYSTEMS (AS DEFINED IN ARTICLE III''. ANY DEPLOYMENT OF SUCH SYSTEMS WAS SUBJECT TO PRELIMINARY CONSULTATION WITH THE OTHER SIDE AND TO THE INTRODUCTION OF THE NECESSARY AMENDMENTS TO THE TREATY.

- THE ABM TREATY WAS OF FUNDAMENTIAL IMPORTANCE FOR THE WHOLE PROCESS OF NUCLEAR ARMS CONTROL. IT WAS THE BASIS OF STRATEGIC STABILITY AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY.

D) SUMMIT

- THE SOVIET UNION WAS GOING TO THE SUMMIT WITH A FIRM DESIRE TO AGREE ON JOINT MEASURES. THERE WAS NO SIGN YET OF BUSINESSLIKE AND CONSTRUCTIVE US PREPARATIONS. THE US HAD NOT MADE A SINGLE POSITIVE STEP OR CONSTRUCTIOVE PROPOSAL.

COMMENT

3. THE INTERESTING FEATURES OF THIS AUTHORITATIVE REVIEW OF ARMS CONTROL PROSPECTS IN THE RUN-UP TO THE SUMMIT ARE THE EXPLICIT SUGGESTION THAT SPACE BASED WEAPONS COULD BE A PART OF THE SOVIET RESPONSE TO SDI, AND THE VERY FIRM STAND ON THE ABM TREATY, RESTRICTIVELY INTERPRETED. IN HIS TASS INTERVIEW ON 5 MAY (MOSCOW TELNO 653) DEFENCE MINISTER SOKOLOV MENTIONED THZ POSSIBILITY OF SOVIET DEFENSIVE (''ANTI-MISSILE'') COUNTER-MEASURES TO SDI, BUT MADE NO MENTION OF SPACE BASING. AKHROMEEV HIMSELF, IN PRAVDA ON 4 JUNE (MOSCOW TELNO 794) SPOKE ONLY OF ''ADDING TO THE PROTECTIONS'' OF SOVIET STRATEGIC FORECES.

4. THE TONE OF THE ARTICLE IS TOUGH. BUT IT FITS THE PATTERN OF SOVIET BUILD-UP TO THE SUMMIT IN WHICH THE SOVIET PEACE INITIATIVES ARE CONTRASTED WITH US RIGID INSISTENCE ON SDI, NUCLEAR TESTING, INF DEPLOYMENT, NUCLEAR MODERNISATION RE-INTERPRETING OF ABM OBLIGATIONS AND GENERAL REFUSAL TO RESPOND CONSTRUCTIVELY TO REASONABLE SOVIET PROPOSALS.

5. IT IS NOT CLEAR WHY THE RUSSIANS HAVE GONE THE STEP FURTHER PUBLICLY, TOWARDS SPACE BASED WEAPONS OF THEIR OWN AS A RESPONSE TO SDI, PARTICULARLY WHEN ACCOMJPANIED BY A REPETITION OF REASSURING LANGUAGE ABOUT THERE BEING NO CURRENT SOVIET''STAR WARS'' DEVELOPMENT. THE MOST LIKELY TARGET IS WESTERN AND SOVIET PUBLIC OPINION. THE MESSAGE TO THE FORMER IS THAT AN UNCONTROLLED, DESTABILISING AND EXPENSIVE SPACE ARMS RACE IS INDEED A REAL POSSIBILITY AND THAT IS IT THE US THAT IS PUSHING THINGS THAT WAY: TO THE LATTER, REASSURANCE THAT EFFECTIVE SOVIET RESPONSE IS IN HAND.

6. THERE IS NO REFERENCE EVEN BY IMPLICATION TO THE NEW SOVIET PROPOSALS (FCO TELNO 1662 TO WASHINGTON). INDEED AKHROMEEV REPEATS THE PREVIOUS PROPOSAL FOR EQUALITY OF SS20S WITH BRITISH AND FRENCH SYSTEMS.

CARTLEDGE

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