OUT TELEGRAM

(1)

		Classification	Caveat	Precedence
		CONFIDENTIAL		FLASH

ZCZC
TC
CAVEAT
FM
TO
TELNO
OF
AND TO

ZCZC
CONFIDENTIAL

FM FCO
TO FLASH BONN
TELNO
OF 031900Z SEPTEMBER 85

Prime Minister

Gorbachev has announced the main details of the Soviet arms control offer in Paris. Agree this is proposed comment? CDP 3/x. MF

FOR PRIVATE SECRETARY FROM PRIVATE OFFICE
GORBACHEV SPEECH ON ARMS CONTROL

1. In a speech to the French National Assembly today, Gorbachev outlined the main points in the Soviet proposals tabled in Geneva. He also said that Moscow was prepared for direct talks with France and Britain on the place of their nuclear deterrents in the European balance of forces. "This potential is growing fast and we cannot close out eyes to it".

2. The following is a suggested line to take on Gorbachev's proposals as a whole, together with a line to take on the reference to France and Britain. We are sending a copy of this telegram in parallel to No 10. Grateful for clearance so that this can be used if necessary at the 12.30 press conference tomorrow.

Q: Reaction to Gorbachev's proposals

A: It is a step forward that the Soviet side has at last made specific counter-proposals at Geneva. This represents the first indication of a serious willingness to address the main issues in all three areas of the negotiations. We shall be consulting closely with the US and our other allies about the details of the

YYYY
MAIN
ADDITIONAL
NNNN

Catchword: Soviet

File number	Dept	Drafted by (Block capitals)	Telephone no
	PRIVATE OFFICE	L V APPLEYARD	233 5791

Authorised for despatch by: Initials Date/time L V Appleyard

For COD use only	Comcen reference	Telegram number	Processed by

XY 48 (REV)

OUT TELEGRAM (CONT)

	Classification	Caveat	Precedence
	CONFIDENTIAL		FLASH

<<<<

<<<<

Soviet ideas. From the reports we have so far received, these appear to contain a number of unsatisfactory elements. Extensive and serious negotiations will be needed if real progress is to be made.

Q: Gorbachev proposal for direct talks with UK/France on their nuclear forces?

A: No formal proposal has been made to HMG. The British position is clear: it was described by the Foreign Secretary to the United Nations General Assembly in September 1983: "We have never said "Never". On the contrary, we have made it clear that, if Soviet and US strategic arsenals were to be very substantially reduced, and if no significant changes had occurred in Soviet defensive capabilities, Britain would want to review her position and to consider how best she could contribute to arms control in the light of the reduced threat". Third country forces are not a matter for Geneva, where the negotiations are by agreement bilateral ones between the US and Soviet Union.

Q: Soviets asking for no more missiles in Europe than British and French total.

A: The British submarine launched missiles are strategic weapons, as the Soviets themselves acknowledged at the time of SALT I. They do not match Soviet SS20s targetted against the NATO European allies, who agreed in 1979 that US medium range missiles were essential to balance the Soviet threat to the Alliance as a whole. (SS20 numbers have continued to grow despite Soviet denials). Their evident aim is to undermine the American security guarantee to Western Europe by securing a Soviet missile monopoly.

Ends

HOWE

YYYY

For distribution order see Page	Catchword: MINIMAL

XY48A (REV)

OUT TELEGRAM (CONT)

	Classification	Caveat	Precedence
	CONFIDENTIAL		FLASH

<<<<	1	<<<<
	2	MINIMAL
	3	NEWS DEPT
	4	DEFENCE DEPT
	5	PS
	6	
	7	NNNN
	8	
	9	
	10	
	11	
	12	
	13	
	14	
	15	
	16	
	17	
	18	
	19	
	20	
	21	
	22	
	23	
	24	
	25	
	26	
	27	
	28	
	29	
	30	
///	31	
//	32	
/	33	
	34	

For distribution order see Page	Catchword:

XY 48A (REV)