

OUT TELEGRAM

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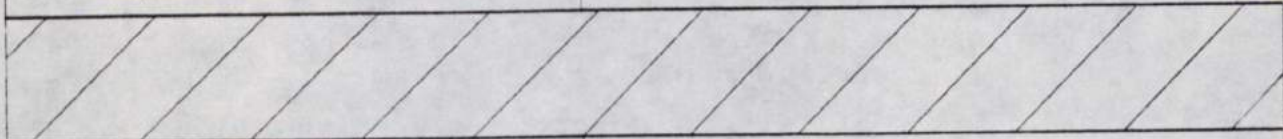
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7 OF 031900Z SEPTEMBER 85  
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*Time Minister*  
*Gorbachev has announced*  
*the main details of the*  
*Soviet arms control offer in*  
*Paris. Agree this proposed*  
*comment?*  
*CDP*  
*3/x*  
*MT*

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10 FOR PRIVATE SECRETARY FROM PRIVATE OFFICE  
11 GORBACHEV SPEECH ON ARMS CONTROL  
12 1. In a speech to the French National Assembly today,  
13 Gorbachev outlined the main points in the Soviet proposals tabled  
14 in Geneva. He also said that Moscow was prepared for direct talks  
15 with France and Britain on the place of their nuclear deterrents  
16 in the European balance of forces. "This potential is growing  
17 fast and we cannot close our eyes to it".  
18 2. The following is a suggested line to take on Gorbachev's  
19 proposals as a whole, together with a line to take on the  
20 reference to France and Britain. We are sending a copy of this  
21 telegram in parallel to No 10. Grateful for clearance so that  
22 this can be used if necessary at the 12.30 press conference  
23 tomorrow.  
24 **Q: Reaction to Gorbachev's proposals**  
25 **A: It is a step forward that the Soviet side has ~~now~~ made specific**  
26 **counter-proposals at Geneva. This represents the first**  
27 **indication of a serious willingness to address the main issues in**  
28 **all three areas of the negotiations. We shall be consulting**  
29 **closely with the US and our other allies about the details of the**



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Catchword: <b>Soviet</b>	
File number	Dept <b>PRIVATE OFFICE</b>
Drafted by (Block capitals) <b>L V APPLEYARD</b>	Telephone no <b>233 5791</b>
Authorised for despatch by: <i>LV Appleyard</i>	Initials Date/time
For COD use only	Comcen reference
Telegram number	Processed by

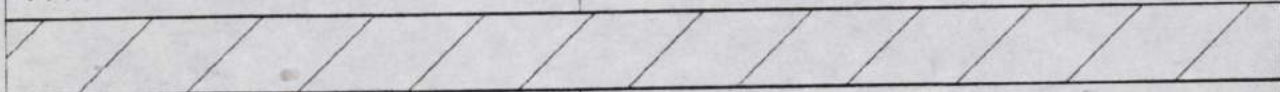
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2	Soviet ideas. From the reports we have so far received, these
3	appear to contain a number of unsatisfactory elements. Extensive
4	and serious negotiations will be needed if real progress is to be
5	made.
6	Q: Gorbachev proposal for direct talks with UK/France on their
7	nuclear forces?
8	A: No formal proposal has been made to HMG. The British position
9	is clear: it was described by the Foreign Secretary to the United
10	Nations General Assembly in September 1983: "We have never said
11	"Never". On the contrary, we have made it clear that, if Soviet
12	and US strategic arsenals were to be very substantially reduced,
13	and if no significant changes had occurred in Soviet defensive
14	capabilities, Britain would want to review her position and to
15	consider how best she could contribute to arms control in the
16	light of the reduced threat". Third country forces are not a
17	matter for Geneva, where the negotiations are by agreement
18	bilateral ones between the US and Soviet Union.
19	Q: Soviets asking for no more missiles in Europe than British and
20	French total.
21	A: The British submarine launched missiles are strategic weapons,
22	as the Soviets themselves acknowledged at the time of SALT I.
23	They do not match Soviet SS20s targetted against the NATO
24	European allies, who agreed in 1979 that US medium range missiles
25	were essential to balance the Soviet threat to the Alliance as a
26	whole. (SS20 numbers have continued to grow despite Soviet
27	denials). Their evident aim is to undermine the American security
28	guarantee to Western Europe by securing a Soviet missile monopoly.
29	Ends
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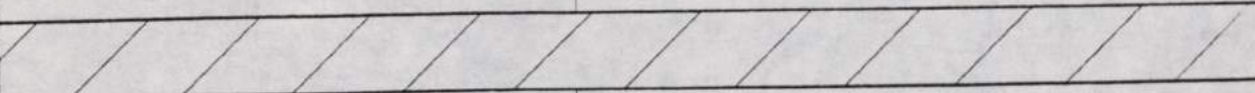
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