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AND TO PRIORITY WASHINGTON, PARIS, UKDEL NATO
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INFO ROUTINE OTHER NATO POSTS, UKMIS NEW YORK, UKDIS GENEVA
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INFO SAVING PEKING, TOKYO, OTHER EAST EUROPEAN POSTS

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UK/SOVIET ARMS CONTROL TALKS : VISIT OF KARPOV
SUMMARY

1. EXTENSIVE DISCUSSIONS WITH KARPOV, COVERING ALL MAIN ARMS CONTROL ISSUES INCLUDING BROADER STRATEGIC ASPECTS. SOVIET FOCUS MAINLY ON START AND SDI. NO MAJOR REVELATIONS OR CHANGES IN SOVIET APPROACH, BUT DISCUSSIONS AGREED TO BE VALUABLE BY BOTH SIDES. KARPOV PRESSED LESS HARD THAN EXPECTED ON UK FORCES AND NUCLEAR TESTING. MAIN AIM APPARENTLY LESS TO EMBARRASS US ON OUR OWN ACCOUNT THAN TO DRIVE WEDGE BETWEEN US AND AMERICAN POSITIONS AT GENEVA. REFERENCES TO SHEVARDNADZE VISIT.
DETAIL

2. KARPOV SPEND SEVEN AND A HALF HOURS HERE TODAY, INCLUDING AN HOUR WITH MR RENTON, DURING WHICH WE COVERED ALL THE MAIN

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ARMS CONTROL ISSUES AND SOME OF THE BROADER STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS. FULL RECORD FOLLOWS BY BAG. KARPOV HAD NO OBJECTION TO THE LINE WE PROPOSED TO TAKE WITH THE PRESS, FOR WHICH SEE MIFT.

3. THE ADVICE ABOUT HANDLING HIM (YOUR TELNO 411 AND WASHINGTON TELNO 881) WAS MOST HELPFUL. HE SHOWED THE EXPECTED EXPERTISE IN THE GENEVA ISSUES. ON OTHERS HE WAS LESS SURE-FOOTED, IMPLYING THAT HE A GENERAL BRIEF TO COVER THE WHOLE FIELD, BUT NOT SPECIFICALLY CONFIRMING THE US REPORT THAT HE WAS NOW IN CHARGE OF A NEW ARMS CONTROL DEPARTMENT IN THE MFA. THROUGHOUT THE DISCUSSIONS (IN WHICH HE SPOKE THROUGH AN INTERPRETER BUT NEEDED NO TRANSLATION INTO RUSSIAN, AND CONSULTED NO BRIEF) HE WAS EVIDENTLY DETERMINED TO APPEAR REASONABLE AND MODERATE. AT TIMES HE WAS CONTENT TO REST ON HIS PROPAGANDA CUSHION, AS YOU SUGGESTED. BUT HE WAS NEVER LOTH TO PICK UP POINTS FROM OUR SIDE AND TO ENGAGE IN A PROPER DEBATE PARTICULARLY ON SDI ISSUES.

4. HE WAS SURPRISINGLY UNEMPHATIC ABOUT THE ROLE OF UK FORCES IN ARMS CONTROL. WHEN HE RAISED THE SUBJECT WITH MR RENTON HE RECEIVED A SHARP RESPONSE AND IT WAS THEREAFTER HARDLY MENTIONED AGAIN. HE DID HOWEVER 'THINK ALOUD' AT A LATER STAGE ABOUT THE DAMAGING EFFECT ON UK FORCES WHICH A SOVIET RESPONSE IN KIND TO THE SDI WOULD CREATE. HE ALSO DID NOT PRESS THE NUCLEAR TESTING ISSUE TO ANY GREAT DEGREE. HIS MAIN AIM APPEARED TO BE WEDGE-DRIVING BETWEEN US AND THE AMERICANS IN THE CONTEXT OF GENEVA, AND PARTICULARLY ON SDI AND START ISSUES. DAUNT MADE IT CLEAR THAT WE FIRMLY SUPPORTED US POSITIONS, AND LOOKED TO THE SOVIET UNION FOR SERIOUS AND CONSTRUCTIVE RESPONSES. WHAT WAS NEEDED NOW WAS A REAL NEGOTIATION, FOR WHICH A FURTHER SET OF SOVIET PROPOSALS WAS REQUIRED, NOT ANOTHER SERIES OF PUBLIC GAMBITS DESIGNED FOR PROPAGANDA PURPOSES.

5. MR RENTON EMPHASISED THAT WE LOOKED FORWARD TO FURTHER EXCHANGES WITH SHEVARDNADZE HERE VERY SOON, ON THESE AND OTHER ISSUES. KARPOV AGREED THAT DISCUSSION BETWEEN THE TWO FOREIGN MINISTERS COULD BE USEFUL, ESPECIALLY IF IT PRODUCED MOVEMENT TOWARDS THE RESOLUTION OF CURRENT PROBLEMS.

6. ON SDI AND THE SPACE/DEFENCE TALKS KARPOV DESCRIBED

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THE SOVIET PROPOSALS ON 'SPACE STRIKE ARMS' IN FAMILIAR TERMS, AND SAID THAT THE RUSSIANS WERE READY AND WILLING TO ENGAGE IN AN INTENSIVE DIALOGUE ON THE OFFENSIVE/DEFENSIVE RELATIONSHIP, AS DAUNT URGED. BUT THE US HAD REFUSED THIS. MOSCOW NOW AWAITED A RESPONSE TO THEIR LATEST PROPOSALS. MEANWHILE THE US HAD ALREADY ENTERED THE WEAPONS DEVELOPMENT STAGE, WHILE CONTINUING PLANS FOR INCREASES IN OFFENSIVE SYSTEMS. THE COMBINATION WOULD BE DESTABILISING. KARPOV ALSO COMPLAINED ABOUT THE UK PARTICIPATION IN SDI RESEARCH. DAUNT RESPONDED FIRMLY THAT OUR APPROACH TO SDI WAS GOVERNED BY THE CAMP DAVID FOUR POINTS, WHICH KARPOV ACKNOWLEDGED PRESENTED NO PROBLEM TO THE SOVIET UNION. WE WERE ALSO CONFIDENT THAT US RESEARCH REMAINED COMPLIANT WITH THE ABM TREATY, AND THAT IT WOULD BE SOME TIME BEFORE ANY DECISIONS NEEDED TO BE TAKEN ON STEPS BEYOND RESEARCH. THE IMPORTANCE OF STRENGTHENING THE TREATY WAS AGREED, WITH KARPOV DESCRIBING IT AS THE 'CORNER-STONE' OF ARMS CONTROL

7. ON UK FORCES AND INF, KARPOV SPOKE AS EXPECTED ABOUT THE ALLEGED 'CONCESSION' IN DROPPING THE REQUIREMENT FOR COMPENSATION. THE UK WAS NOW ONLY REQUIRED TO TAKE 'MINIMUM MEASURES'. THERE WAS NO SOVIET OBJECTION TO MODERNISATION AS SUCH, BUT ONLY TO INCREASED NUMBERS MR RENTON EMPHASISED THAT OUR POSITION REMAINED UNCHANGED. WE WOULD MAINTAIN A MINIMUM DETERRENT, WHICH HAD THE SUPPORT OF THE BRITISH PUBLIC. WE WOULD NOT ACCEPT DISARMAMENT BY OBSOLESCENCE. OUR CONDITIONS FOR REVIEWING OUR POSITION WERE ALSO UNALTERED. THE UK DETERRENT WAS STRATEGIC AND WHOLLY IRRELEVANT TO THE INF TALKS. STRIKINGLY, KARPOV DID NOT REVERT TO THE SUBJECT IN SUBSTANCE AGAIN.

8. OTHER POINTS TO ARISE WERE AS FOLLOWS:

- (I) DAUNT EXPLAINED OUR BROAD AIMS IN ARMS CONTROL: STRATEGIC STABILITY, CRISIS MANAGEMENT AND ADEQUATE VERIFICATION. KARPOV INITIALLY DID NOT RESPOND, BUT AT A LATER STAGE COUNTERED WITH A SUBSTANTIVE EXPOSITION OF SOVIET THINKING (ALBEIT ON FAMILIAR LINES):
- (II) ON START HE CLAIMED THAT THE IMPASSE WAS SOLELY THE FAULT

- OF UNBALANCED US PROPOSALS, AND EMPHASISED THE NEED FOR STRICT CONTROLS, AND EVEN ELIMINATION, OF LONG-RANGE CRUISE MISSILES. THE LATTER AND THE PERSHING II WERE MORE DESTABILISING THAN (ESPECIALLY MOBILE ICBMS)
- (III) KARPOV ARGUED THAT FYLINGDALES WOULD BE ILLEGAL UNDER THE ABM TREATY. IT HAD BEEN EARLIER AGREED WITH THE US THAT ONLY EXISTING RADARS COULD BE MODERNISED, BUT THAT NEW PHASED ARRAY RADARS COULD NOT BE CONSTRUCTED OUTSIDE NATIONAL BORDERS. DAUNT RESPONDED THAT WE AND THE AMERICANS TOOK A DIFFERENT VIEW:
- (IV) ON KRASNOYARSK DAUNT EMPHASISED THAT WESTERN CONCERNS MUST BE MET IF PROGRESS IN ARMS CONTROL WERE TO BE MADE. KARPOV PREDICTABLY ARGUED THAT THE RADAR WAS FOR SPACE-TRACKING ONLY, AND - AS WOULD BE CLEAR WHEN IT BECAME OPERATIONAL - WAS TECHNICALLY INCAPABLE OF AN ABM ROLE (HE DID NOT REFER TO A BMEW CAPABILITY). THE RUSSIANS WERE 'SICK AND TIRED' OF THE ISSUE AND (ALTHOUGH THEY FELT NO GUILT) HAD OFFERED THE TRADE-OFF WITH THULE AND FYLINGDALES AS A COMPROMISE.
- (V) ON TESTING, THE SOVIET UNION WAS READY TO DISCUSS WITH THE (US AND THE UK) BOTH THE MODALITIES OF A TOTAL BAN AND VERIFICATION MEASURES FOR SUCH A BAN. MR RENTON URGED THE NEED FOR FURTHER WORK IN THE CD ON VERIFICATION:
- (VI) THERE WERE PREDICTABLE EXCHANGES ON CW, MBFR AND CDE, IN WHICH KARPOV GAVE NO DISCERNIBLE GROUND BUT WAS AT PAINS TO AVOID APPEARING UNNECESSARILY NEGATIVE.
9. PARIS: PLEASE INFORM THE FRENCH THAT WE SPOKE ABOUT THE UK FORCES ALONG THE LINES OF PARA 4 AND 7 ABOVE. YOU MAY ALSO GIVE THEM AN OUTLINE BRIEFING ON OTHER ISSUES.
10. WASHINGTON: DAUNT WILL BRIEF THE AMERICANS ALONG THE ABOVE LINES IN WASHINGTON ON 21 APRIL.
11. UKDEL NATO: YOU MAY DRAW UPON THE ABOVE AT YOUR DISCRETION TO BRIEF COLLEAGUES AT YOUR NEXT PERM REPS LUNCH.

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