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CONFIDENTIAL
DD 300500Z MOSCO
OO HELSI
OO WARSA
FM FCOLN TO MOSCO
291815Z APR
GPS 1298

CONFIDENTIAL
FM FCO
TO DESKEY 300500Z MOSCOW
TELNO 308

OF 291815Z APRIL 86
INFO IMMEDIATE STOCKHOLM, HELSINKI, COPENHAGEN, OSLO, BONN,
INFO IMMEDIATE WARSAW, WASHINGTON, UKMIS VIENNA
INFO ROUTINE PARIS, THE HAGUE, BRUSSELS, UKREP BRUSSELS
INFO SAVING LUXEMBOURG, DUBLIN, PRAGUE, EAST BERLIN, BUDAPEST

CHERNOBYL NUCLEAR ACCIDENT

YOUR TELECON WITH GORDON AND YOUR REPORTING TELS

1. PLEASE NOW CALL ON MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE ON 30 APRIL AND SPEAK AS FOLLOWS.

2. PUBLIC OPINION, PARLIAMENT AND THE MEDIA IN THE UK ARE DEEPLY CONCERNED AT REPORTS OF THE CHERNOBYL NUCLEAR ACCIDENT AND ITS CONSEQUENCES. THE GOVERNMENT URGENTLY NEEDS TO HAVE THE FULLEST POSSIBLE INFORMATION IN ORDER TO ASSESS THE LIKELY CONSEQUENCES FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM. IT IS PARTICULARLY CONCERNED FOR THE SAFETY OF BRITISH CITIZENS IN OR NEAR THE AFFECTED AREA. CURRENTLY THERE ARE SOME 100 BRITISH STUDENTS AND TEACHERS RESIDENT IN MINSK AND KIEV. THERE ARE PROBABLY ALSO OTHER BRITISH NATIONALS VISITING ON A SHORTER-TERM BASIS. WE NEED FURTHER TO KNOW WHETHER THERE ARE ANY DANGERS FOR BRITISH CITIZENS ELSEWHERE IN THE SOVIET UNION, EG AS A RESULT OF CHANGING METEOROLOGICAL CONDITIONS.

3. WE HAVE NOW WISH TO PRY

1

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CONFIDENTIAL

33467 - 1

INTO SOVIET INTERNAL AFFAIRS. BUT IT WILL BE EVIDENT TO THE SOVIET AUTHORITIES THAT THE MATTER IS OF LEGITIMATE MAJOR CONCERN TO THE UK. IN ABSENCE OF INFORMATION PRESSURE IS MOUNTING IN UK FOR EVACUATION OF THOSE CURRENTLY IN USSR AND FOR OTHERS TO CANCEL PLANNED VISITS. SOVIET AUTHORITIES WILL MOREOVER RECALL DISCUSSIONS IN THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AUTHORITY IN 1982-1984 WITH THE AIM OF PRODUCING GUIDELINES ON COOPERATION AND EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION BETWEEN GOVERNMENTS IN THE EVENT OF NUCLEAR EMERGENCIES SUCH AS CHERNOBYL. BRITISH AND SOVIET EXPERTS PARTICIPATED FULLY IN THIS SUCCESSFUL EXERCISE AND THE RESULTS MAY THEREFORE BE PRESUMED TO HAVE THE BLESSING OF BOTH GOVERNMENTS.

4. IN VIEW OF THE ABOVE, AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RELEVANT IAEA GUIDELINES, WE NOW REQUEST ALL AVAILABLE FACTS OF IMPORTANCE FOR ASSESSING THE SITUATION, INCLUDING:

- A. IDENTIFICATION OF THE FACILITY INVOLVED.
- B. THE NATURE OF THE ACCIDENT, THE TIME AT WHICH IT OCCURRED AND ITS POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT.
- C. INFORMATION ON THE DEVELOPMENT AND TERMINATION OF THE EMERGENCY.
- D. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RELEASE.
- E. INFORMATION ON METEOROLOGICAL AND HYDROLOGICAL CONDITIONS, NECESSARY FOR FORECASTING THE DISPERSION AND DILUTION OF THE RELEASE.
- F. OFF-SITE PROTECTIVE MEASURES TAKEN OR RECOMMENDED.
- G. RESULTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING.

5. MORE DETAILED INFORMATION REQUIRED UNDER THESE HEADINGS INCLUDES
A - C : THE TIME AT WHICH THE ACCIDENT OCCURRED AND ITS POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING THE PRESENT STATE OF THE CORE AND HOW IT MAY CHANGE THE

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

33467 - 1

D: STATE OF THE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY CONTAINMENTS (WAS THE PRIMARY CONTAINMENT BREACHED?). HAS THERE BEEN A FIRE AND IS IT NOW UNDER CONTROL? WAS THERE A HYDROGEN EXPLOSION? WHEN DID THE RELEASE START, IS IT CONTINUING AND, IF NOT, WHEN DID IT CEASE? THE FISSION PRODUCT AND ACTINIDE INVENTORY PRIOR TO THE ACCIDENT. THE FRACTION OF THE INVENTORY RELEASED AND THE RATE OF RELEASE. THE AMOUNT OF FUEL MELTED OR VAPORISED. THE HEIGHT AT WHICH THE RELEASE OCCURRED. THE PHYSICAL AND CHEMICAL FORM OF THE MATERIAL RELEASED. THE WIND DIRECTION AND SPEED, WEATHER CATEGORY, RAINFALL RATE (IF ANY) DURING THE PERIOD OF THE RELEASE, AND ANY SUBSEQUENT CHANGES IN THE WEATHER PATTERN AND WIND DIRECTION.

F AND G : OVER WHICH AREAS HAS EVACUATION TAKEN PLACE, HAS SHELTERING BEEN ADVISED AND HAVE IODINE TABLETS BEEN ISSUED?

WHAT RESTRICTIONS HAVE BEEN IMPOSED ON THE REMOVAL OF CONTAMINATED MATERIAL FROM AFFECTED AREAS BY AIR, SEA OR LAND?

OVER WHAT AREAS HAS CONSUMPTION OF WATER, MILK AND FOOD SUBSTANCES BEEN RESTRICTED?

6. IT IS IMPORTANT ALSO TO KNOW:

- HOW MANY DEATHS SO FAR
 - (A) ON SITE
 - (B) OFF SITE.
- NUMBERS OF CASUALTIES BOTH ON SITE AND OFF SITE
 - (A) REQUIRING HOSPITALISATION

CONFIDENTIAL

33467 - 1

(B) EXPERIENCING LESS SERIOUS
CLINICAL SYMPTONS.

PREDICTED EXPOSURES OF RESIDENTS IN MINSK AND
KIEV TO DATE AND IN THE FUTURE. (WE NEED TO
KNOW THIS IN ORDER TO DETERMINE WHETHER
BRITISH CITIZENS IN EITHER CITY WILL NEED
SPECIAL MEDICAL TREATMENT EITHER IMMEDIATELY
OR SUBSEQUENTLY ON RETURN TO UK).

WHAT MEDICAL PRECAUTIONS ARE BEING ADVISED.
ARE WE RIGHT TO ASSUME THAT MEDICAL TREATMENT
OF ADVICE ON OFFER WILL BE EXTENDED TO
FOREIGNERS INCLUDING UK CITIZENS?

7. YOU SHOULD BE AWARE THAT WE HAVE RECEIVED REPORTS FROM
STOCKHOLM AND BONN THAT THE SOVIET AUTHORITIES HAVE INFORMED
THE SWEDES AND GERMANS THAT ONE OF THE CHERNOBYL GRAPHITE-
MODERATED REACTORS IS (OR WAS) ON FIRE, AND ASKED FOR ADVICE
IN DEALING WITH IT. BOTH THE SWEDES AND GERMANS HAVE SUGGESTED
THAT THE UK IS WELL PLACED TO ADVISE ON CONTROL OF GRAPHITE
FIRES. WE DOUBT THAT THERE IS A CLOSE PARALLEL WITH THE 1957
WINDSCALE FIRE (AS SOME WESTERN GOVERNMENTS APPARENTLY BELIEVE).
NEVERTHELESS, YOU SHOULD INFORM THE SOVIET AUTHORITIES THAT IF
THEY STILL REQUIRE ADVICE, UK EXPERTS ARE READY TO PROVIDE THIS.
IN SUCH AN EVENTUALITY DETAILED ADVANCE INFORMATION WOULD BE
ESSENTIAL.

8. OUR EXPERTS ARE CONCERNED THAT THE SITUATION IN KIEV,
AND POSSIBLY ALSO IN MINSK COULD DETERIORATE SUFFICIENTLY TO
REQUIRE EVACUATION. BUT AGAIN WE ARE HAMPERED BY THE LACK OF
ANY CONCRETE INFORMATION. PLEASE STRESS TO SOVIET AUTHORITIES
THAT IF THIS IS NOT IMMEDIATELY FORTHCOMING, WE MAY CONSIDER IT
NECESSARY TO ADVISE THEIR WITHDRAWAL. YOU SHOULD ALSO DISCUSS
WITH WESTERN COLLEAGUES CONTINGENCY PLANNING FOR A JOINT
OPERATION IN SUCH AN EVENTUALITY.

4

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

33467 - 1

9. WE FULLY UNDERSTAND YOUR FURTHER CONCERN ABOUT THE SITUATION IN MOSCOW (YOUR TELNO 494). WITHOUT FURTHER INFORMATION, EG ON WIND MOVEMENTS, EXPERTS CANNOT GIVE AN INFORMED OPINION. HOWEVER, THEY ESTIMATE THAT WHATEVER HAPPENS TO THE WEATHER THERE IS NO SIGNIFICANT DANGER TO INDIVIDUALS IN MOSCOW OVER THE NEXT FEW DAYS. WE SHALL GIVE TOP PRIORITY TO PROVIDING FURTHER ADVICE AS SOON AS MORE INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE.

10. WE ARE SEEKING CLEARANCE FROM MINISTERS TO ISSUE THE FOLLOWING GUIDANCE: 'IN THE ABSENCE OF DETAILED INFORMATION ON THE NATURE OF THE NUCLEAR ACCIDENT IN THE SOVIET UNION WE ARE ADVISING BRITISH CITIZENS THAT THEY SHOULD ONLY TRAVEL TO THE WESTERN SOVIET UNION IF IT IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY.'

11. WE APPRECIATE YOUR URGENT NEED FOR ADVICE AND GUIDANCE. WE CANNOT PROVIDE THIS ADEQUATELY UNLESS AND UNTIL THE RUSSIANS GIVE US THE NECESSARY INFORMATION. WHERE WE HAVE HAD TO REACT, AS OVER VISITS TO THE SOVIET UNION AND OVER POSSIBLE EVACUATION WE CONSIDER WE HAVE NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO ERR ON THE SIDE OF CAUTION. WE ARE URGENTLY PURSUING THE QUESTION OF PROVIDING MONITORING EQUIPMENT, AND HOPE TO PUT THIS IN TOMORROW'S BAG.

12. THE ABOVE HAS BEEN DRAFTED IN FULL CONSULTATION WITH WHITEHALL TECHNICAL EXPERTS.

HOWE

SOVIET NUCLEAR ACCIDENT

LIMITED

NED
SOVIET DEPT
WED
EED
MAED
CONSULAR DEPT
NEWS DEPT

PS
PS/MR RENTON
PS/PUS
MR DEREK THOMAS
MR GOODALL
MR DAUNT
MR RATFORD

COPIES TO:

M RICKMAN CABINET OFFICE
B PONSFORD DOE, ROMNEY HOUSE
F FEATES " " "
D MORPHET DEPT OF ENERGY, AE DIV.
B HAMPTON " " " "
M HARRIS, DHSS, HEALTH SERVICES DIV,
HANNIBAL HOUSE.
E RYDER HSE N11, THAMES HOUSE SOUTH
J MACLEOD " " " "
S SEYMOUR OT3/5C, DT1, 1 VIC. ST.
R HATHAMAY, MAFF
D LEVEY, UKAEA
N BURTON, BRITISH COUNCIL

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