

RESTRICTED

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OCCIAN 3756  
RESTRICTED  
DD 302200Z WARSA  
OO MOSCO  
PP BUCHA  
PP BUDAP  
PP PRAGU  
PP BELGR  
FM FCOLN TO WARSAW  
301930Z APR  
GRS 534

RESTRICTED  
FM FCO  
TO DESKBY 302200Z WARSAW  
TELNO 119  
OF 301930Z APRIL 86  
INFO IMMEDIATE MOSCOW, STOCKHOLM, COPENHAGEN, OSLO, BONN  
INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON, UKMIS GENEVA  
INFO PRIORITY VIENNA, UKMIS VIENNA, BUCHAREST, BUDAPEST  
INFO PRIORITY PRAGUE, BELGRADE  
INFO ROUTINE PARIS, THE HAGUE, BRUSSELS, UKREP BRUSSELS

YOUR TELNO 142: CHERNOBYL

1. THERE IS A LACK OF HARD INFORMATION ABOUT RADIATION LEVELS IN POLAND. HOWEVER, THE HIGHEST LEVELS REPORTED TO US ARE THOSE IN THE NORTH EAST WHERE THEY ARE FIFTY TIMES THE BACKGROUND LEVELS. THIS LEVEL, WHICH SOUNDS ALARMING, IS OF NO RADIOLOGICAL HEALTH SIGNIFICANCE.
2. THE GREATEST DANGER AREA WOULD HAVE BEEN UP TO 100 MILES NORTH WEST OF THE ORIGINAL EXPLOSION, IE IN THE DIRECTION OF THE WIND PREVAILING AT THE TIME. ALTHOUGH THE WIND SUBSEQUENTLY WENT ROUND TO THE NORTH THE GRADUALLY SPREADING CLOUD WILL NOW BE DISPERSING. IT IS THOUGHT THAT THE RESIDUAL MATERIAL WHICH

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IS NOW BEING DISPERSED IS VERY MUCH LESS RADIOACTIVE AND THE AMOUNT BEING DISCHARGED IS LESS THAN WITH THE INITIAL EXPLOSION. SOME OF THE SHORT LIFE RADIOACTIVE ISOTOPES WILL ALREADY BE DEGENERATING. A HIGHER INCIDENCE OF CANCER AND MILK CONTAMINATION IS LIKELY TO OCCUR UP TO 150 AND 200 MILES DOWN WIND OF THE ACCIDENT. FOR PREGNANT WOMEN AND SMALL CHILDREN THERE MAY BE A LOW-LEVEL RISK UP TO 300 MILES DOWN-WIND. (WARSAW IS OF COURSE WELL OUTSIDE THIS AREA.) AS THINGS STAND AT PRESENT, NO HARMFUL EFFECTS ARE LIKELY IN THE REST OF THE SOVIET UNION, SCANDINAVIA OR THE REST OF EUROPE, THOUGH A HIGHER THAN NORMAL LEVEL OF RADIOACTIVITY THERE IS LIKELY.

3. HOWEVER, WE STRONGLY SYMPATHISE WITH THE CONCERN FELT BY YOUR STAFF WITH PREGNANT WIVES AND YOUNG CHILDREN, GIVEN THAT WARSAW IS THE CLOSEST CAPITAL DOWN-WIND OF CHERNOBYL. WE ARE THEREFORE PREPARED TO AUTHORISE THEIR EVACUATION FOR THE SAKE OF THEIR MORALE IF THEY WISH TO LEAVE. WE CANNOT, I AM AFRAID, OFFER THEM THE FULL EVACUATION PACKAGE. IF THEY DECIDE TO GO, WE SHOULD BE GRATEFUL IF THEY WOULD USE THE CHEAPEST AVAILABLE FARES AND COULD STAY WITH RELATIVES IN THE UK. IN CASE OF NEED WE WOULD BE PREPARED TO CONSIDER APPLICATIONS FOR SUBSISTENCE AND/OR TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION EXPENSES. WE HOPE THEY WILL CONTACT OUR MEDICAL ADVISER WHILE THEY ARE IN THE UK.

4. KNOWLEDGE THAT YOU HAVE DISCRETION TO EVACUATE PREGNANT WOMEN AND SMALL CHILDREN WILL, PRESUMABLY, BECOME PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE. YOU SHOULD MAKE CLEAR TO ENQUIRERS THAT THERE IS NO EVIDENCE SUGGESTING THAT PEOPLE IN WARSAW ARE AT RISK AND THERE IS NO QUESTION OF EVACUATION ON MEDICAL GROUNDS OR OF ADVISING THEM TO LEAVE. THE POSITION IS SIMPLY THAT, WHATEVER THE MEDICAL EVIDENCE, PEOPLE ARE BOUND TO BE CONCERNED ABOUT PREGNANT WOMEN AND SMALL CHILDREN. IN THEIR CASE IT SEEMED SENSIBLE TO THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE ADMINISTRATION TO OFFER THE OPPORTUNITY TO LEAVE FOR THE SAKE OF THEIR PEACE OF MIND.

5. FOR MOSCOW AND OTHER EASTERN EUROPEAN POSTS. WE ARE KEEPING THE POSITION UNDER CONTINUAL REVIEW AS REGARDS OTHER POSTS, BUT DO NOT CONSIDER THAT AT THE MOMENT THERE IS A CASE FOR APPLYING THESE ARRANGEMENTS MORE WIDELY.  
HOPE

SOVIET NUCLEAR ACCIDENT

LIMITED

NED  
SOVIET DEPT  
WED  
EED  
MAED  
CONS DEPT  
NEWS DEPT  
INFO DEPT  
PUSD  
POD  
ECD(E)

PS  
PS/MR RENTON  
PS/LADY YOUNG  
PS/MR EGGAR  
PS/MRS CHALKER  
PS/PUS  
MR BARRINGTON  
MR DEREK THOMAS  
MR GOODALL  
MR DAUNT  
MR RATFORD  
MR BARRINGTON

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