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PS TO PM. NO. 10 DOWNING STREET.

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TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 594 OF 8 JUN

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MY TELS NOS 557 AND 566:

W 9/6

THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT STATEMENT OF 28 MAY ON NUCLEAR WEAPONS
AND THE WILLIAMSBURG SUMMIT

f.a.

1. I SEE SIGNS THAT THE RUSSIANS WERE WRONG-FOOTED BY THE UNITY AND FIRMNESS OF THE WILLIAMSBURG STATEMENT ON DEFENCE AND DISARMAMENT. IN PARTICULAR, THEY APPEAR NOT TO HAVE FORESEEN JAPANESE AND FRENCH ASSOCIATION WITH A STATEMENT OF THIS KIND. AFTER INITIAL HESITATION ABOUT HOW TO PRESENT THE OUTCOME OF WILLIAMSBURG, IT IS SIGNIFICANT THAT SOVIET PRESS CRITICISM IS NOW CONCENTRATING ITS FIRE ON JAPAN AND FRANCE. THE GENERAL SOVIET THESIS IS THAT WILLIAMSBURG'S SUPPORT FOR INF DEPLOYMENT WAS THE RESULT OF AMERICAN 'ARM TWISTING'. PRAVDA OF 4 JUNE SUGGESTED THAT SIMILAR US TACTICS WOULD PROBABLY PREVAIL AT THE NATO MINISTERIAL MEETING ON 9/10 JUNE. IT IS THEREFORE SURPRISING THAT, SO FAR, THE SOVIET PRESS HAS MADE ONLY HALFHEARTED ATTEMPTS TO IDENTIFY DIFFERENCES AMONG NATO MEMBERS AND IT HAS, FOR EXAMPLE, MADE VERY LITTLE OF THE RECENT RESOLUTION OF THE DANISH FOLKETING.
2. IN THE LIGHT OF THE ABOVE THE RUSSIANS MAY CONSIDER THAT THEIR 28 MAY STATEMENT ON THE EVE OF WILLIAMSBURG, OR AT LEAST ITS THREATENING TONE, WAS MISJUDGED. PRAVDA'S WEEKLY INTERNATIONAL REVIEW ON 5 JUNE, WHICH FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE SOVIET CENTRAL PRESS RECOGNISED THAT THE SUMMIT STATEMENT MIGHT REPRESENT A RESPONSE TO IT, WAS NOTABLY DEFENSIVE, AND PRAVDA ON 8 JUNE DEVOTED A LENGTHY ARTICLE TO JUSTIFYING THE STATEMENT, MAINLY BY DAMNING US INTENTIONS. BOTH ARTICLES INSISTED THAT MOSCOW'S WARNING ON THE CONSEQUENCES OF DEPLOYMENT WAS NOT A THREAT, AS WESTERN PROPAGANDISTS CLAIMED, BUT A LOGICAL RESPONSE TO A GROWING DANGER OF WAR: 'A MISSIVE OF PEACE AND HOPE.' NEITHER WITH THE PRIME MINISTER OF BADEN WURTEMBERG, SPATH, NOR WITH THE SPANISH FOREIGN MINISTER (MY TEL NO 584) DID SOVIET LEADERS LAST WEEK LAY MUCH STRESS ON THEIR STATEMENT OF 28 MAY AND THE THREAT OF COUNTER-DEPLOYMENT. ANDROPOV WAS AT SOME PAINS DURING THE FINNISH PRESIDENT'S VISIT (MY TEL NO 591) TO STRESS THE DEFENSIVE NATURE OF THE SOVIET RESPONSE TO DEPLOYMENT AND THE SOVIET UNION'S CONTINUING INTEREST IN AN AGREEMENT IN GENEVA. THE AMBIGUOUS PHRASE IN THE STATEMENT OF 28 MAY - THAT THE SOVIET UNION WAS 'CONFRONTED WITH THE NECESSITY' TO TAKE MEASURES IN RESPONSE TO

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THE US NUCLEAR BUILD UP - WAS INTERPRETED BY SOME WESTERN COLLEAGUES HERE AS SUGGESTING THAT THE RUSSIANS WERE ALREADY PROCEEDING WITH PLANS FOR COUNTER-DEPLOYMENTS. BUT THE LANGUAGE USED BY ANDROPOV WITH KOIVISTU HAS LESS IMMEDIACY: THE SOVIET UNION "WILL BE FORCED TO TAKE MEASURES" IF INF DEPLOYMENT GOES AHEAD.

3. THE FACT REMAINS THAT THIS RECENT SLIGHTLY SOFTER PRESENTATION OF THE 28 MAY STATEMENT IS NO MORE THAN FINE-TUNING. THE RUSSIANS CONTINUE TO DRAW MORE ATTENTION TO THE POSSIBILITY OF SOVIET COUNTER-DEPLOYMENT THAN TO THE SUBSTANCE OF THEIR PROPOSALS IN GENEVA.

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