

CONFIDENTIAL
FM MOSCOW
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELNO 392
OF 071624Z MARCH 90

FOR HEAD OF SOVIET DEPARTMENT.
YOUR TELNOS 334-335: MESSAGE TO GORBACHEV

SUMMARY

1. GORBACHEV'S FOREIGN POLICY ADVISER WELCOMES THE PRIME MINISTER'S MESSAGE, AND IN PARTICULAR ITS REFERENCES TO A TREATY. CHERNYAYEV REITERATES THE CASE AGAINST NATO MEMBERSHIP FOR A UNITED GERMANY, IS CRITICAL OF KOHL AND SCEPTICAL OF GENSCHER'S 'DULCET TONES'. HE UNDERScores GORBACHEV'S 6 MARCH TV INTERVIEW (MY TELNO 389).

DETAIL

2. I CALLED ON CHERNYAYEV ON 7 MARCH TO DELIVER THE PRIME MINISTER'S MESSAGE TO GORBACHEV. I UNDERLINED THE IMPORTANCE WE ATTACHED TO CLOSE CONTACT ON THIS SUBJECT. CHERNYAYEV DESCRIBED THE MESSAGE AS VERY SATISFACTORY, AND SAID HE WOULD SUBMIT IT AT ONCE TO GORBACHEV. HE SEIZED WITH PLEASURE ON THE PRIME MINISTER'S SUPPORT FOR A TREATY TO GUARANTEE POLAND'S BORDERS.

TWO PLUS FOUR

3. CHERNYAYEV SAID THAT SOVIET ACCEPTANCE OF THE INVITATION TO BONN WAS BEING FORMULATED. HE EXPRESSED SATISFACTION THAT THE MECHANISM HAD BEEN ACTIVATED. (THE FRG AMBASSADOR HAS SINCE RECEIVED FORMAL SOVIET ACCEPTANCE OF THE INVITATION, ON THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE IN THE GDR, WITH SUBSEQUENT VENUES LEFT OPEN.)

SHEVARDNADZE'S LETTER OF 2 MARCH

4. CHERNYAYEV WAS NOT CLOSELY BRIEFED. HE KNEW OF NO SPECIFIC REASON TO EXPECT TROUBLE: BUT UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES WERE, BY DEFINITION, IMPOSSIBLE TO NAME IN ADVANCE. HE SPECULATED THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY MIGHT HAVE BEEN CONCERNED THAT THE BUNDESTAG AND VOLKSHAMMER WOULD ON 19 MARCH ADOPT A JOINT DECLARATION ON UNITY. THE SIX MIGHT HAVE BECOME FIVE OVERNIGHT. BUT SUCH FEVERED IMAGININGS HAD CALMED DOWN. IN GENERAL HE APPEARED REASONABLY RELAXED ABOUT THE RUN-UP TO THE GDR ELECTIONS.

EAST GERMANY

5. CHERNYAYEV SAID THAT THE RUSSIANS HAD HAD GOOD MEETINGS WITH EAST

GERMAN LEADERS IN THE PAST WEEK. MODROW HAD BROUGHT REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ROUND TABLE WITH HIM, AND WAS LEADING A COLLEGIAL ADMINISTRATION. HE WOULD NOT DO ANYTHING WITHOUT THE ROUND TABLE'S SUPPORT. THE RUSSIANS HAD THEREFORE MET THE AUTHORITATIVE LEADERSHIP OF THE COUNTRY.

6. THE RUSSIANS EXPECTED THE SPD (EAST) TO WIN THE ELECTIONS ON 18 MARCH. THEY WERE LESS CERTAIN WHO WOULD BECOME PRIME MINISTER. BOEHME WAS A DECENT, INTELLIGENT MAN, BUT HE LACKED EXPERIENCE OF POLITICS AT THE PARTY AND NATIONAL LEVEL. MODROW HAD MORE EXPERIENCE, BUT WOULD ABIDE BY THE RESULT OF THE VOTING. THE SITUATION IN THE GDR WAS STABILISING. THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH WAS WIELDING A BENEFICIAL INFLUENCE BEHIND THE SCENES. THE GDR WAS NOT LIKELY TO DISAPPEAR IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE ELECTIONS. THE RAPPROCHEMENT WOULD BE BETWEEN TWO STATES.

UNIFICATION

7. CHERNYAYEV REPEATED THAT WE COULD NOT OPPOSE UNITY. GERMANY HAD TO BECOME A NORMAL STATE. THE PROCESS WAS GOING IN A POSITIVE DIRECTION. BUT HE SPOKE VERY STRONGLY AGAINST ATTEMPTS TO FORCE THE PACE, ARGUING THAT IT WOULD TAKE TIME TO EMBRACE THE COMPLEX AND DIFFERING INTERESTS OF LARGE NUMBERS OF PEOPLE. KOHL HAD BEEN PRESSING AHEAD FOR ELECTORAL CONSIDERATIONS IN A 'NOT VERY ELEGANT WAY'. IF WE READ BETWEEN THE LINES OF GORBACHEV'S COMMENTS TO THE MEDIA ON 6 MARCH WE WOULD SEE SOME CRITICISM OF KOHL. THERE WERE NATURAL RHYTHMS AND STIMULI TO UNITY. THESE SHOULD BE RESPECTED. THERE WERE PROFOUND HUMAN PROBLEMS. WHAT WOULD BE THE FUTURE OF ORDINARY, LAW-ABIDING STATE EMPLOYEES OF THE GDR? SUCH PROBLEMS WOULD SLOW THE PACE OF UNIFICATION.

NATO

9. CHERNYAYEV SAID THAT GORBACHEV HAD SPELLED OUT THE SOVIET ATTITUDE. HE HIMSELF HAD ADVISED GORBACHEV TO DO THIS. THE RUSSIANS RULED OUT NATO MEMBERSHIP. GORBACHEV'S VIEWS HAD CRYSTALLISED IN RESPONSE TO EVENTS OF RECENT WEEKS. IT WAS NOT A MILITARY QUESTION: IT WAS PSYCHOLOGICALLY UNACCEPTABLE. HE REFERRED (AS HE HAD IN OTHER RECENT MEETINGS) TO THE RESULTS OF THE WAR AND THE SACRIFICES AND DAMAGE BORNE BY THE SOVIET PEOPLE. IT WOULD LOOK LIKE A VICTORY FOR NATO OVER THE WARSAW PACT, TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE LATTER'S WEAKNESS. THEY HAD HEARD GENSCHER'S 'DULCET TONES' OFFERING SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS. BUT IT BOILED DOWN TO AN ATTEMPT TO REVISE THE OUTCOME OF THE WAR TO THE MORAL AND PHYSICAL DISADVANTAGE OF THE SOVIET UNION.

10. I SAID THAT, WHILE OUR POSITIONS ON GERMANY WERE GENERALLY CLOSE, IN THIS AREA THERE WAS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN US. AS THE PRIME MINISTER'S LETTER HAD INDICATED, WE WERE CONSCIOUS OF THE SOVIET UNION'S SECURITY INTEREST BUT CONFIDENT THAT SUITABLE ARRANGEMENTS COULD BE DEvised WITHIN MEMBERSHIP OF NATO. I ALSO UNDERLINED THE PRIME MINISTER'S REMARKS ABOUT STRENGTHENING THE CSCE FRAMEWORK. CHERNAYAYEV DID NOT JIB AT THIS, AND RECALLED HIS CONVERSATION WITH SIR P CRADOCK (MOSCOW TELNO 310). BUT HE SUMMARISED THE KEY POINTS AS BEING A PEACE TREATY AND THE CREATION OF NEW SECURITY 'INSTITUTIONS'.

COMMENT

11. CHERNYAYEV WAS HIS CUSTOMARY RELAXED SELF. WHILE IMPLICITLY SCEPTICAL ABOUT THE RELIABILITY OF THE WEST GERMAN LEADERSHIP, AND OF KOHL'S 'CORRECTIVE' ON THE FRONTIER QUESTION, HE EXHIBITED NO PARTICULAR NERVOUSNESS ABOUT THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE. THE PROPOSAL TO HOLD AN EARLY MEETING OF THE FOUR PLUS TWO WILL HELP SOVIET CONFIDENCE. AT THE SAME TIME THERE IS INEVITABLE CONCERN ABOUT GDR POLICY AFTER 18 MARCH. IN CONTACTS WITH OTHER CENTRAL COMMITTEE OFFICIALS THE WEST GERMAN EMBASSY HAVE ENCOUNTERED CONCERN AT THE POSSIBLE ABSENCE OF VIABLE AUTHORITY IN THE GDR AFTER THE ELECTION AND AT THE RISK OF A BREAKDOWN IN PUBLIC ORDER.

12. I LEAVE ANY FURTHER COPYING OF THIS TELEGRAM TO YOU.

LYNE

YYYY

DISTRIBUTION

13

MAIN 13

NO DISTRIBUTION
HD/SOVIET
HD/WED
HD/SEC POL
HD/PLANNERS
PS
PS/MR WALDEGRAVE

PS/MR MAUDE
PS/PUS
PS/NO 10 DOWNING ST
MR P J WESTON
MR BROOMFIELD
MR GOULDEN
MR TAIT

NNNN