

START

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 PS/LADY YOUNG  
 PS/MR LUCE  
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 SIR J BULLARD  
 MR WRIGHT  
 MR JENKINS  
 MR CARTLEDGE  
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GRS 1130

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DESKBY 051500Z

FM MOSCOW 051343Z DEC 83

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 1394 OF 5 DEC

INFO IMMEDIATE ATHENS (DESKBY 051500Z) (FOR S OF S'S PARTY)

UKDEL NATO, WASHINGTON, MODUK (DS17),

INFO PRIORITY BONN,

INFO ROUTINE OTHER NATO POSTS, SOFIA, BELGRADE, BUCHAREST,

BUDAPEST, EAST BERLIN, WARSW, PRAGUE, UKDIS GENENA IN

NEW YORK, STOCKHOLM,

INFO SAVING TOKYO

MY TEL NO 1385 (NOT TO ALL) : INF : SOVIET PRESS CONFERENCE

SUMMARY

CONFERENCE WAS GIVEN ON INF BY KORNIENKO

## SUMMARY

1) ON 5 DECEMBER A PRESS CONFERENCE WAS GIVEN ON INF BY KORMIENKO (FIRST DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER), MARSHAL OGARKOV (CHIEF OF THE GENERAL STAFF AND FIRST DEPUTY DEFENCE MINISTER) AND ZAMYATIN

(HEAD OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE'S INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION DEPARTMENT). THEY KEPT CLOSELY TO ANDROPOV'S 24 NOVEMBER STATEMENT, REPEATEDLY QUOTING HIS REMARKS ON RESUMPTION OF THE GENEVA TALKS IN RETURN FOR WESTERN 'READINESS' TO RETURN TO THE SITUATION BEFORE WESTERN DEPLOYMENT. (PARA 5 OF MY TEL NO 1354). OPTIMISM IN THE WEST ABOUT AN EARLY SOVIET RETURN TO THE TALKS DESPITE DEPLOYMENT WAS DISMISSED. THE SOVIET POSITION ON INF WAS BRIEFLY REHEARSED, INCLUDING THE NEED TO TAKE BRITISH AND FRENCH SYSTEMS INTO ACCOUNT. IN REPLY TO QUESTIONS A MERGER OF INF AND START WAS DESCRIBED AS A HYPOTHETICAL ISSUE 'AT PRESENT'. THE IMPLICATIONS OF DEPLOYMENT FOR START WOULD BECOME CLEAR AT THE SCHEDULED START MEETING ON 8 DECEMBER. ZAMYATIN SAID ANDROPOV WAS GETTING BETTER AND CARRYING OUT ALL HIS DUTIES. HE ALSO CONDEMNED AMERICAN ATTACKS ON SYRIAN POSITION IN LEBANON.

## DETAILS

2. EACH OF THE THREE SOVIET OFFICIALS MADE AN OPENING STATEMENT. ZAMYATIN STRESSED ANDROPOV'S CALL FOR WESTERN LEADERS TO WEIGH ONCE AGAIN THE CONSEQUENCES OF DEPLOYMENT. KORMIENKO SAID THAT, AS WELL AS THE USA, FRG, BRITAIN AND ITALY, A SHARE OF THE RESPONSIBILITY WAS BORNE BY OTHER NATO GOVERNMENTS WHO SUPPORTED THE US STAND. HE ALSO EMPHASISED THAT THE 'OSTENTATIOUS OPTIMISM' IN SOME WESTERN CAPITALS ABOUT AN EARLY RETURN TO THE GENEVA TALKS NOTWITHSTANDING DEPLOYMENT WAS 'NOTHING ELSE BUT A WISH TO AVOID RESPONSIBILITY.....TO ASCRIBE TO THE SOVIET UNION READINESS TO CONTINUE, AS IF NOTHING HAD HAPPENED, THE FORMER TALKS, AS THE AMERICAN MISSILES ARE BEING INSTALLED IN WESTERN EUROPE, IS NOT JUST TO ENGAGE IN WISHFUL THINKING.... BUT DELIBERATELY TO MISLEAD BOTH ONE'S OWN PEOPLE AND WORLD PUBLIC OPINION IN A BID TO HOLD BACK THE GROWTH OF MASS PROTESTS AGAINST THE STATIONING OF THE AMERICAN MISSILES. BUT THESE ARE ATTEMPTS THAT INVOLVE WORTHLESS MEANS. ONE WILL NOT GET FAR BY PRACTISING DECEPTION.'

3. OGARKOV, WITH THE AID OF CHARTS, RAN THROUGH IN FAMILIAR TERMS THE SOVIET VERSION OF THE INF BALANCE, AND SOVIET AND 'UNACCEPTABLE' US PROPOSALS FOR INF AND START (162 BRITISH AND

TERMS THE SOVIET VERSION OF THE INF BALANCE, AND SOVIET AND "UNACCEPTABLE" US PROPOSALS FOR INF AND START (162 BRITISH AND FRENCH SYSTEMS WITH A TOTAL OF 430 WARHEADS FEATURED). HE ARGUED THAT THE US WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE BREAKDOWN OF THE INF TALKS, WANTING FROM THE BEGINNING NUCLEAR SUPERIORITY RATHER THAN AN AGREEMENT. THEIR START POSITION POINTED IN THE SAME DIRECTION. OGARKOV DID NOT DESCRIBE IN DETAIL SOVIET MEASURES IN RESPONSE TO INF DEPLOYMENT. BUT HE STRESSED BOTH IN HIS OPENING REMARKS AND IN REPLY TO A QUESTION THAT THEY WOULD BE "NO LESS EFFECTIVE THAN THE AMERICAN WEAPONS BEING DEPLOYED IN EUROPE AS REGARDS THEIR RANGE, YIELD, ACCURACY AND, MOST IMPORTANT, THE FLIGHT TIME TO THEIR TARGETS".

4. IN REPLY TO QUESTIONS THE FOLLOWING POINTS WERE MADE:

(A) THERE WAS NO (NO) CONTRADICTION BETWEEN ANDROPOV'S REFERENCE IN HIS STATEMENT TO THE WEST SHOWING "READINESS" AS A CONDITION FOR RESUMING THE GENEVA TALKS (REPEATED BY GROMYKO, AT A MEETING WITH THE POLISH FOREIGN MINISTER REPORTED IN PRAVDA ON 3 DECEMBER) AND THE DEMAND FOR A RETURN TO A SITUATION OF NO-DEPLOYMENT IN THE PRAVDA EDITORIAL ON 2 DECEMBER (MY TEL NO 1388). WORDS WOULD HAVE TO BE CONVERTED INTO DEEDS (KORNIENKO).

(B) NO PROGRESS WAS BEING MADE AT THE TALKS JUST BEFORE THEY WERE DISCONTINUED (KORNIENKO).

(C) SOVIET COUNTERMEASURES. THE AIM OF THE MISSILES TO BE DEPLOYED IN THE GDR AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA WAS TO NEUTRALISE THE AMERICAN THREAT FROM THE PERSHING'S IN THE FRG. THE NUMBERS OF THESE MISSILES WOULD BE DETERMINED BY THE ACTIONS OF THE US AND OTHER NATO COUNTRIES. THEIR RANGE WOULD BE SUFFICIENT TO REACH MOST OF THE NEW MISSILES IN WESTERN EUROPE. WESTERN CLAIMS THAT THESE MEASURES HAD ALREADY BEEN PLANNED TO GO AHEAD NOTWITHSTANDING WESTERN DEPLOYMENT WERE AN ATTEMPT TO DECEIVE PUBLIC OPINION. AS ANDROPOV HAD MADE CLEAR SOVIET SYSTEMS WOULD ALSO BE DEPLOYED IN OCEAN AREAS AND IN THE SEAS NEAR US TERRITORY. THE MILITARY POSSIBILITIES (FOR COUNTERMEASURES) WERE NOT RESTRICTED TO MISSILES. OTHER MEASURES WOULD ALSO BE TAKEN, BUT THEY COULD NOT BE SPECIFIED NOW (OGARKOV).

(D) IT WAS POINTLESS AT PRESENT TO TALK ABOUT THE MERGING OF INF AND START. (KORNIENKO). AT PRESENT THERE "EXIST"

(D) IT WAS POINTLESS AT PRESENT TO TALK ABOUT THE MERGING OF INF AND START. (KORNIENKO). AT PRESENT THERE "EXIST" (CORRECTED TO "EXISTED") PARALLEL NEGOTIATIONS ON INF AND START. THE FIRST HAD BEEN BROKEN OFF BY THE AMERICANS AND THE SECOND WERE GOING IN THE SAME DIRECTION. IT WAS FIRST OF ALL NECESSARY TO CHANGE THE AMERICAN APPROACH (OGARKOV). ASKED WHETHER HE EXCLUDED THE POSSIBILITY OF A MERGER, OGARKOV SAID THAT THIS WAS AT PRESENT HYPOTHETICAL.

(E) IT WAS TOO EARLY TO SAY EXACTLY WHAT THE CONSEQUENCES OF INF DEPLOYMENT WOULD BE FOR THE START TALKS. THIS WOULD BE CLEARER AT THE LAST MEETING OF THIS ROUND ON 8 DECEMBER (KORNIENKO).

(F) ASKED WHETHER THE SOVIET UNION WOULD AGREE NOT TO COUNT BRITISH AND FRENCH SYSTEMS IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE A COMPROMISE AGREEMENT ON INF OGARKOV REPLIED "NO".

(G) THE SOVIET PLEDGE NOT TO USE NUCLEAR WEAPONS FIRST WAS STILL IN FORCE (ZAMYATIN).

5. ANDROPOV'S HEALTH. IN REPLY TO QUESTIONS ZAMYATIN REFERRED TO ANDROPOV'S OWN MESSAGE TO A CONFERENCE OF DOCTORS IN WHICH HE HAD SAID THAT HE HAD A COLD. ANDROPOV WAS NOW GETTING BETTER AND FULLY ENGAGING IN PARTY AND GOVERNMENT BUSINESS AND HIS DUTIES AS CHAIRMAN OF THE DEFENCE COUNCIL. ZAMYATIN REFUSED TO ADD ANYTHING WHEN LATER ASKED WHETHER ANDROPOV HAD HAD AN OPERATION AND WHEN HE WOULD RE-APPEAR, BUT IMPLIED THAT WESTERN REPORTS "DID NOT CORRESPOND TO REALITY".

6. ON A POSSIBLE US/SOVIET MEETING IN STOCKHOLM AT THE CDE, KORNIENKO SAID THAT THERE WAS NOT YET AGREEMENT ON AN OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE AT FOREIGN MINISTER LEVEL. IT WAS THEREFORE TOO EARLY TO TALK ABOUT A US/SOVIET MEETING. THE SOVIET APPROACH TO THE CDE WAS CONSTRUCTIVE. BUT IT WOULD BE POLITICALLY NAIVE TO THINK THAT THE NEW SITUATION IN EUROPE FOLLOWING DEPLOYMENT WOULD NOT HAVE AN EFFECT.

7. FOR ZAMYATIN'S COMMENTS ON THE MIDDLE EAST SEE MIFT (NOT TO ALL).

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FM MOSCOW 021400Z DEC 83

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELNO 1385 OF 2 DEC 83

INFO IMMEDIATE UKDEL NATO, WASHINGTON.

INF.

1. ON 5 DECEMBER A PRESS CONFERENCE ON INF WILL BE GIVEN BY KORNIIENKO (FIRST DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER), OGARKOV (CHIEF OF THE GENERAL STAFF) AND ZAMYATIN (HEAD OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE'S INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION DEPT). A MEMBER OF CHANCERY WILL ATTEND.

SUTHERLAND

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