

GR 950

CONFIDENTIAL

FM MOSCOW 010430Z SEP 82

TO PRIORITY F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 494 OF 1 SEPTEMBER

SAVING FOR INFO WASHINGTON, UKDEL NATO

CONFIDENTIAL

(AMENDED DISTRIBUTION 2 SEPTEMBER)

Prime Minister

mt

*w
3/A*

CALL ON GROMYKO

1. I PAID MY FAREWELL CALL ON GROMYKO ON 31 AUGUST. WE TALKED FOR 45 MINUTES, MAINLY ABOUT THE GENERAL COURSE OF EAST-WEST RELATIONS BUT ALSO ABOUT THE MIDDLE EAST, ARMS CONTROL AND ANGLO-SOVIET RELATIONS. THROUGHOUT GROMYKO SEEMED DISPOSED NOT TO BE CONTENTIOUS, BUT TO BE SEEKING A BETTER RELATIONSHIP, WITHOUT BEING ABLE TO OFFER ANY SIGN OF SUBSTANTIVE POLICIES WHICH WOULD JUSTIFY IT.

EAST-WEST RELATIONS

2. IN THE COURSE OF INITIAL COURTESIES GROMYKO COMMENTED THAT MY WORK HAD NOT BEEN EASY DURING THE PERIOD OF MY STAY IN MOSCOW. I AGREED AND COMMENTED THAT THE DIFFICULTIES IN OUR, AND MORE GENERALLY THE WEST'S, RELATIONS WITH THE USSR REFLECTED A LACK OF CONFIDENCE ABOUT SOVIET POLICIES. THIS HAD BEEN CAUSED BY SOVIET ACTIONS IN RECENT YEARS AND BY THE IMPRESSION THAT SOVIET POLICIES WERE BASED MORE ON A BELIEF IN THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN SOCIALISM AND CAPITALISM THAN ON ACCEPTANCE OF THE EXISTENCE OF DIFFERENT POLITICAL SYSTEMS AND INTERESTS. IN A LENGTHY RESPONSE GROMYKO SPOKE OF THE HISTORY OF ANGLO-SOVIET RELATIONS, THE UPS AND DOWNS, AND THE SOVIET POLICY OF 'PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE'. WE EACH HAD OUR OWN SYSTEM, LAWS, AND IDEOLOGY. DIFFERENCES OF VIEW COULD NOT BE AVOIDED BUT WE MUST WORK THEM OUT AROUND THE NEGOTIATING TABLE IN CONDITIONS OF PEACE, NOT TRY TO IMPOSE OUR VIEWS ON EACH OTHER BY FORCE. GROMYKO KEPT RETURNING TO THE NEED TO SEEK A COMMON LANGUAGE. UNFORTUNATELY THERE WERE SOME COUNTRIES THAT DID NOT ACCEPT THE NEED TO DO SO, AND FOR EXAMPLE IN THE LAST YEAR HAD OBJECTED TO EVERY PROPOSAL AIMED AT IMPROVING THE SITUATION IN THE WORLD.

3. I COMMENTED THAT THERE WERE DIFFERENT INTERPRETATIONS OF THE PROCESS OF 'PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE' AND 'DETENTE'. MANY IN THE WEST FELT THAT THE SOVIET UNION SAW THIS AS A SPECIFIC FORM OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE WHICH MERELY EXCLUDED THE RECOURSE TO MILITARY POWER (GROMYKO'S OWN DEFINITION IN HIS JANUARY 1981 ARTICLE IN 'KOMMUNIST').

MIDDLE EAST

4. I THEN TURNED TO THE MIDDLE EAST AS ONE AREA WHERE THERE DID NOT NECESSARILY HAVE TO BE A DIRECT CONFLICT OF INTERESTS AND WHERE WE COULD SEEK A COMMON LANGUAGE. HOW DID HE SEE THE PROBLEM DEVELOPING? GROMYKO CONDEMNED THE ISRAELIS IN FAMILIAR

CONFIDENTIAL

/TERMS.

TERMS. THEY WERE DRIVEN BY A DESIRE FOR FURTHER ANNEXATIONS. THE ARABS WOULD NOT FORGET FOR CENTURIES THE ACTIONS OF THE ISRAELIS IN THE LEBANON AND THOSE WHOM PROMPTED AND AIDED THEM. GROMYKO GAVE LITTLE AWAY IN REPLY TO SPECIFIC QUESTIONS:

(A) GEMAYEL: GROMYKO SAID THAT HE WAS KNOWN TO FAVOUR CAMP DAVID AND TO BE PREPARED TO SIGN A SEPARATE DEAL WITH ISRAEL. EFFECTIVELY HE WAS WILLING TO BE AN ALLY OF ISRAEL. HE MADE IT FAIRLY CLEAR THAT HE DID NOT SEE GEMAYEL DEVELOPING INTO A LEADER FOR ALL THE LEBANESE.

(B) PROSPECTS FOR COMPLETE ISRAELI AND SYRIAN WITHDRAWAL. IT WAS DIFFICULT TO PREDICT HOW THE SITUATION WOULD DEVELOP. ASSUMING THE QUESTION OF THE EVACUATION OF BEIRUT WAS SOLVED OR PARTLY SOLVED THE MAIN ISSUE WAS NOW THE COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL OF THE ISRAELIS FROM LEBANESE TERRITORY. AS FOR THE SYRIANS, THEY WERE THERE AS A RESULT OF A WIDER ARAB DECISION WHICH GAVE THEM AN OFFICIAL STATUS. THE ARABS WOULD DISCUSS THE MATTER AMONG THEMSELVES.

(C) PALESTINIANS. GROMYKO WOULD SAY NO MORE THAN THAT THERE WAS NO CHANGE IN THE SOVIET POSITION. THEY WOULD CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE PALESTINIANS IN THE ATTAINMENT OF THEIR RIGHTS, INCLUDING THEIR OWN STATE.

ARMS CONTROL

5. ASKED ABOUT THE PROSPECTS FOR THE CURRENT ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS GROMYKO SAID THAT HE REFRAINED FROM AN OPTIMISTIC PROGNOSIS. THE TALKS WERE DIFFICULT. HOW COULD THEY NOT BE WHEN ONE SIDE SAID OPENLY THAT THEY DID NOT WANT AGREEMENT. ALL THAT SIDE WANTED WAS NO INTERFERENCE IN THEIR PLANS FOR AN ARMS BUILD UP. THE ZERO OPTION WAS A BAD POLICY WITH NO FUTURE. THE SOVIET UNION HOPED THE UK WOULD EXERT ITS INFLUENCE WITH THE U.S. I CHALLENGED GROMYKO'S DISMISSAL OF AMERICAN SERIOUSNESS IN THE TALKS AND HIS COMMENTS ON THE ZERO OPTION BUT HE CLEARLY DID NOT WANT TO PURSUE THIS SUBJECT. LATER IN THE CONVERSATION HE NOTED THAT OBJECTIVE POSSIBILITIES EXISTED FOR AGREEMENT BETWEEN EAST AND WEST INCLUDING ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT, BUT "SOME GOVERNMENTS LACKED THE NECESSARY WILL."

ANGLO SOVIET RELATIONS

6. GROMYKO AT INTERVALS RETURNED TO THE THEME THAT HE HAD RESPECT FOR BRITISH VIEWS AND HOPED THAT WE WOULD TAKE AN INDEPENDENT LINE RATHER THAN FOLLOW THE U.S. GROMYKO SAID THAT HE WAS ENCOURAGED BY CERTAIN SIGNS THAT THE U.K. FAVOURED LINKS WITH THE SOVIET UNION. WHILE THE USSR DID NOT WANT TO COMPLICATE THE UK'S RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. OR ANY OTHER COUNTRY, THEY LIKED TO THINK THAT THESE SIGNS WERE INDICATIVE OF OUR GENERAL APPROACH TO BILATERAL RELATIONS. THEY HOPED THAT THEY WOULD SEE THE SAME ATTITUDE IN THE FUTURE. SPEAKING FOR THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP AND

CONFIDENTIAL

FOR MR BREZHNEV PERSONALLY GROMYKO WANTED TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT THEY WANTED BETTER RELATIONS WITH THE UK (AND, HE ADDED, WITH THE U S ALSO BUT ON THE BASIS THAT SOVIET INTERESTS AND SECURITY CONCERNS WERE RECOGNISED).

7. I SAID THAT, AS THE PRIME MINISTER HAD SHOWN, WE TOOK OUR OWN DECISIONS, AND IT WAS A FACT THAT THERE WAS A SOLID COMMUNITY OF INTEREST WITH THE U S . I DID NOT PICK UP WHAT I TOOK TO BE A REFERENCE TO OUR ACTIONS OVER THE EXPORT OF EQUIPMENT FOR THE GAS PIPELINE.

8. I SAID THAT YOU WERE LOOKING FORWARD TO YOUR MEETING WITH GROMYKO IN NEW YORK AND AN INFORMAL DISCUSSION OF SUCH ISSUES AS THE MIDDLE EAST AND ARMS CONTROL. GROMYKO WAS VAGUE ABOUT THE DETAILED ARRANGEMENTS BUT SAID THAT HE WAS PERFECTLY HAPPY TO HAVE WHATEVER KIND OF TALK SUITED YOU.

9. GROMYKO SAID THAT HE WOULD MAINTAIN THE SAME KIND OF BUSINESSLIKE RELATIONSHIP WITH MY SUCCESSOR AS WITH MYSELF. IN A BRIEF REFERENCE TO THE FORTHCOMING MEETING OF THE JOINT COMMISSION HE INDICATED THAT HE WAS AWARE OF THE DESIRABILITY OF SIR I SUTHERLAND BEING ABLE TO PRESENT HIS CREDENTIALS IN GOOD TIME.

10. I EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT MY SUCCESSORS WOULD CONTINUE TO LIVE IN THE PRESENT EMBASSY BUILDING. (YOUR TEL NO 466) I COULD NOT UNDERSTAND WHY THE RUSSIANS ^{WISHED} TO MOVE US OUT. THERE WAS NO RESPONSE FROM GROMYKO.

FCO PLEASE PASS BOTH SAVING ADDRESSEES.

KEEBLE

(REPEATED AS REQUESTED)

FCO/WHITEHALL.
RESD
CABINET OFFICE

COPIES SENT TO
No. 10 DOWNING STREET

THIS TELEGRAM
WAS NOT
ADVANCED

3
CONFIDENTIAL