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TO IMMEDIATE MOSCOW

TELEGRAM NUMBER 111 OF 7 OF FEBRUARY

INFO PARIS, BONN, WASHINGTON, THE HAGUE, UKDEL NATO

INFO SAVING UKREP BRUSSELS

ANATOLY SHCHARANSKY

1. I ASKED THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR TO CALL ON 7 FEBRUARY, AND RAISED SHCHARANSKY'S CASE WITH HIM.
2. I RECALLED THAT I HAD RAISED SHCHARANSKY BEFORE, BOTH WITH THE AMBASSADOR AND WITH GROMYKO IN NEW YORK, BUT THE SITUATION HAD NOT CHANGED. SHCHARANSKY'S MOTHER HAD BEEN REFUSED PERMISSION TO SEE HIM, AND THERE WAS INCREASING CONCERN ABOUT HIS HEALTH. I ASKED POPOV TO CONVEY AN APPEAL FOR SHCHARANSKY'S RELEASE ON HUMANITARIAN GROUNDS. SUCH AN ACTION WOULD BE BENEFICIAL TO ANGLO/SOVIET RELATIONS.
3. POPOV SAID THAT SHCHARANSKY HAD BEEN SENTENCED IN OPEN COURT FOR ESPIONAGE ON BEHALF OF THE UNITED STATES. IN MANY COUNTRIES, HIS SENTENCE WOULD HAVE BEEN HEAVIER. CRIME MUST BE PUNISHED. SHCHARANSKY HAD BEEN GIVEN AN OPPORTUNITY TO SEE HIS MOTHER AND HAD GIVEN UP HIS HUNGER STRIKE. I ASKED WHEN HE HAD SEEN HIS MOTHER: POPOV SAID IT HAD BEEN IN JANUARY, HE THOUGHT. HE ADDED THAT THIS WAS A PURELY INTERNAL AFFAIR, AND THE SOVIET UNION NEVER MADE REPRESENTATIONS ON SUCH QUESTIONS. CLEMENCY FOR CONDEMNED PERSONS DEPENDED ON THEIR BEHAVIOUR IN PRISON, AND OUTSIDE PRESSURE COULD ONLY BE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE.
4. I SAID THAT BRITISH PUBLIC OPINION WAS VERY CONCERNED ABOUT THIS QUESTION. WHAT INFORMATION DID POPOV HAVE ABOUT SHCHARANSKY'S HEALTH? POPOV SAID IT WAS SATISFACTORY. I SAID I NOTED HIS ANSWER, BUT OTHER REPORTS GIVE A DIFFERENT IMPRESSION. I WAS MAKING REPRESENTATIONS ON HUMANITARIAN GROUNDS, AND WOULD BE GRATEFUL IF POPOV WOULD REPORT WHAT I HAD SAID. POPOV SAID HE WOULD.

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5. NEWS DEPARTMENT ARE SAYING THAT I ASKED THE AMBASSADOR TO CONVEY A REQUEST FOR SHCHARANSKY'S IMMEDIATE RELEASE ON HUMANITARIAN GROUNDS.

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