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IMMEDIATE

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GRS 277

CONFIDENTIAL

FM MOSCOW 121414Z OCT 83

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 1149 OF 12 OCT

HDS

Sov Dept
News Dept
Integ Dept
PS / me RIFKIND
PS / me WITCOMB
RUS
Sir J. Ballard
Mr James
Lord v. Gordon-Lennox

X 11

No 10 d. S.
R. C.

We have
protested and
shall try
again.
m/c.
ms

UNOFFICIAL SOVIET PEACE GROUP

1. THE SOVIET AUTHORITIES HAVE AGAIN STOPPED US FROM HANDING OVER THE PRIME MINISTER'S LETTER TO REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GROUP.
2. AN APPOINTMENT WAS MADE FOR MEMBERS OF THE GROUP TO COME TO THE EMBASSY AT 1500 HOURS TODAY, 12 OCTOBER. APPROXIMATELY HALF AN HOUR BEFORE THE GROUP WAS DUE TO ARRIVE, THE APPROACHES TO, AND IMMEDIATE VICINITY OF, THE EMBASSY WERE SATURATED WITH PLAIN CLOTHES OFFICIALS AND TRAFFIC ALONG THE EMBASSY EMBANKMENT WAS RESTRICTED BY THE MILITIA.
3. A MEMBER OF THE GROUP TELEPHONED SHORTLY AFTER 1500 HOURS TO SAY THAT HIS COLLEAGUES HAD BEEN DETAINED NEAR THE EMBASSY BUT THAT HE HAD MANAGED TO AVOID ARREST AND REACH A CALL BOX. HE ADDED THAT ON THE PREVIOUS EVENING HE HAD BEEN WARNED BY THE KGB THAT THE GROUP WOULD BE STOPPED FROM COMING TO THE EMBASSY AND THAT THEY SHOULD NOT MAKE THE ATTEMPT.
4. ALTHOUGH MEMBERS OF THE EMBASSY STAFF WERE ON THE LOOKOUT, THEY DID NOT WITNESS THE ARRESTS. THERE CAN BE LITTLE DOUBT, HOWEVER, THAT THE KGB HAS ONCE AGAIN INTERVENED. I RECOMMEND, THEREFORE, THAT WE SHOULD FIRMLY PROTEST HERE AND IN LONDON AT THE SOVIET FAILURE TO HEED THE REPRESENTATIONS WHICH YOU MADE TO GROMYKO (MADRID TELNO 516) AND I TO THE MFA HERE (MOSCOW TELNO 001 TO UKDEL MADRID). WE ALSO WARNED THE MFA YESTERDAY OF THE APPOINTMENT AND SAID THAT WE ASSUMED THAT NO OBSTACLES WOULD BE PUT IN THE GROUP'S WAY.
5. WE INTEND TO INFORM LOCAL BRITISH CORRESPONDENTS OF WHAT HAS HAPPENED.

RATFORD