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CONFIDENTIAL

FM MOSCOW 220945Z APR 85

TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 539 OF 22 APRIL

INFO IMMEDIATE : WASHINGTON, PARIS, BONN, UKDEL NATO, MODUK (HAAL).

YOUR TELNO 391 (NOT TO ALL) : EXPULSIONS

1. THE HEAD OF SECOND EUROPEAN DEPARTMENT AT THE MFA SUSLOV SUMMONED ME AT 1130 LOCAL TIME TODAY, 22 APRIL, TO READ OUT A PROTEST (TRANSLATION OF FULL TEXT IN MIFT) WHICH ACCUSES THE BRITISH AUTHORITIES OF TAKING PROVOCATIVE ACTS OF A POLITICALLY MOTIVATED CHARACTER IN CONTRAST WITH OUR STATED DESIRE OF IMPROVING RELATIONS AND REQUESTS THE WITHDRAWAL OF MY NAVAL ATTACHE CAPT MARSHALL, THE ASSISTANT NAVAL ATTACHE LT CDR LITTLEBOY AND SECOND SECRETARY AND SCIENTIFIC ATTACHE MISS ROBSON WITHIN FOURTEEN DAYS. THE COMMUNICATION GOES ON TO ACCUSE FOUR OTHER MEMBERS OF MY STAFF OF ACTIVITIES INCOMPATIBLE WITH THEIR STATUS, BUT IN THE INTERESTS OF ANGLO/SOVIET RELATIONS THE SOVIET SIDE WILL NOT NOW RAISE THE QUESTION OF THEIR WITHDRAWAL. THE ADDITIONAL FOUR NAMED ARE ASSISTANT AIR ATTACHE SQN LDR STACEY, ASSISTANT NAVAL ATTACHE LT CDR HARDIE, ASSISTANT MILITARY ATTACHE MAJOR HEPBURN AND SECOND SECRETARY GEORGE EDGAR.

2. IN REPLY I MADE THREE POINTS:

(1) IN CONTRAST TO WHAT DR SUSLOV HAD STATED, THE BRITISH SIDE HAD NO WISH TO SEE THE PRESENT INCIDENT AFFECT THE GENERALLY IMPROVING CLIMATE OF ANGLO/SOVIET RELATIONS. THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE SECRETARY OF STATE WERE COMMITTED TO THE POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT OF THOSE RELATIONS AND DID NOT WISH THE INCIDENT TO HINDER OR TO CAST A CLOUD ON THAT DEVELOPMENT. THIS HAD BEEN STATED ON 15 APRIL BY MR THOMAS TO THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR IN LONDON. I WISHED TO RE-EMPHASISE THIS MOST STRONGLY.

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(II) MR THOMAS TOLD THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR THAT THE EVIDENCE AGAINST THOSE WE HAD EXPELLED FROM LONDON WAS IRREFUTABLE. I WAS SATISFIED THAT IT WAS SO. BUT THE ACCUSATIONS AGAINST MEMBERS OF MY STAFF CONTAINED IN THE TEXT WHICH DR SUSLOV HAD READ OUT WERE WITHOUT FOUNDATION. THE RESPONSE OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT WAS WITHOUT JUSTIFICATION.

(III) I WISHED IN TURN TO FORMALLY REGISTER A PROTEST IN THE STRONGEST TERMS AT THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT'S ACTION.

3. DR SUSLOV REPLIED CURTLY THAT THE SOVIET TEXT SPOKE FOR ITSELF. I POINTED OUT THAT MR THOMAS HAD MADE CLEAR TO THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR THAT THERE WOULD BE CERTAIN SPECIFIC CONSEQUENCES IN LONDON IF THE SOVIET UNION TOOK RETALIATORY ACTION BUT DID NOT ENUMERATE THE NAMES IN THE PENULTIMATE PARAGRAPH OF THE SPEAKING NOTE IN YOUR TELNO. 384. SUSLOV SAID THAT I SURELY DID NOT SERIOUSLY EXPECT HIM TO BE FRIGHTENED BY THIS AND THERE WAS NO NEED TO CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION. I CONCLUDED BY RESTATING THE THREE POINTS I HAD ALREADY MADE.

4. FOR COMMENT SEE MY SECOND 17S.T.

SUTHERLAND

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