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FM MOSCOW 061400Z MAY 85

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TELEGRAM NUMBER 649 OF 6 MAY

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YOUR TELNO 466 : SOVIET COMMEMORATION OF VE DAY : MESSAGES

1. HEAD OF CHANCERY TOOK ACTION WITH SECOND EUROPEAN DEPARTMENT TODAY, 6 MAY. IT IS AGREED THAT:-

- (A) BOTH MESSAGES WILL BE PUBLISHED IN THE SOVIET MORNING PRESS ON 8 MAY. HEMANS INFORMED USPENSKY THAT THE TEXTS WOULD BE RELEASED TO THE PRESS IN LONDON ON 7 MAY UNDER EMBARGO WHICH WOULD ENSURE THAT THE MESSAGES WERE NOT PUBLISHED BEFORE 8 MAY.
- (B) THE RUSSIANS INSISTED ON THE MESSAGES BEING DATED 7 MAY DESPITE THE REFERENCES IN THE TWO TEXTS TO 'THIS' DAY. THE RUSSIAN LOGIC WAS THAT THE MESSAGES MUST HAVE BEEN EXCHANGED IN ADVANCE IN ORDER TO APPEAR IN THE MORNING PRESS AND THAT IT WOULD LOOK UNCONVINCING TO DATE THEM 8 MAY WHEN THEY HAD CLEARLY BEEN EXCHANGED BEFORE.
- (C) THE FULL TEXT OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S MESSAGE INCLUDING THE ADDITIONAL SENTENCE WILL BE PUBLISHED. DISCUSSION OF IT DID NOT INDUCE DISCUSSION OF ANY OTHER PARTS OF EITHER TEXT.
- (D) SEE MIFT FOR FULL TEXT OF MRS THATCHER'S MESSAGE AS HANDED TO SOVIET MFA.
- (E) THE SOVIET MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS HAD PRODUCED A DIFFERENT TRANSLATION FROM THE RUSSIAN. IT CLOSELY RESEMBLES THAT HANDED OVER IN LONDON BUT IN THE ABSENCE OF A COPY OF THE RUSSIAN TEXT HANDED OVER IN LONDON I CANNOT SAY WHETHER THE ORIGINALS ARE THE SAME. HEMANS SUGGESTED A NUMBER OF MINOR CHANGES IN THE TRANSLATION ALL OF WHICH WERE READILY ACCEPTED BY USPENSKY. MY SECOND IFT CONTAINS THE FULL ENGLISH TEXT WHICH IT WAS AGREED WOULD BE THE ONE ISSUED IN LONDON AND USED IN ANY ENGLISH TRANSLATION ISSUED BY TASS OR NOVOSTI IN MOSCOW. THE MFA WERE RELUCTANT TO REOPEN THE QUESTION OF TRANSLATION BY LOOKING AT OUR TEXT AND AS IN SOME RESPECTS THE MFA VERSION IS A BETTER AND CLOSER TRANSLATION THAN THE REVISED VERSION BASED ON THAT HANDED OVER IN LONDON, HEMANS DID NOT CONSIDER IT NECESSARY TO INSIST.

2. HEMANS INFORMED USPENSKY THAT WE WOULD BE IN A POSITION TO GIVE THE SOVIET EMBASSY IN LONDON A SIGNED ORIGINAL ON 7 MAY. USPENSKY DID NOT KNOW WHETHER THERE WOULD BE A SIGNED ORIGINAL IN MOSCOW. HE UNDERTOOK TO LOOK INTO IT URGENTLY.

3. I AM INFORMING MY FFENCH AND AMERICAN COLLEAGUES.

SUTHERLAND

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