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TELNO 1180

OF 141905Z SEPTEMBER 55

FOR LLEVELLYN-SMITH, HEAD OF SOVIET DEPARTMENT.

BY TELNO 1176 : RETALIATORY EXPULSION FROM MOSCOW

1. I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO HAVE A VIEW FROM
HERE BEFORE 150600Z ON HOW WE SHOULD REACT TO TODAY'S
RETALIATORY ACTION BY THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT. IT IS NOT EASY TO
BE DISPASSIONATE WITHIN HOURS OF TAKING DELIVERY OF AN ACT
OF VICIOUS AND DISPROPORTIONATE REVENGE, BUT I SHALL DO MY BEST.
MY VIEWS ARE AS FOLLOWS

2. THE MOST PESSIMISTIC FORECASTS WHICH WE HAVE MADE FROM HERE
IN EXCHANGES ON THIS SUBJECT OVER THE LAST TWO MONTHS HAVE BEEN
SUBSTANTIATED AND EVEN EXCEEDED. THE SAVAGE SCALE OF THE
SOVIET RETALIATION CAN BE EXPLAINED, I THINK, ONLY BY THE FACT
THAT THEY HAVE ESTABLISHED, BY A PROCESS OF ELIMINATION, THE
MEANS BY WHICH GORDIYEVSKY REACHED THE WEST. TO THE RETALIATION
WHICH WOULD HAVE RESULTED FROM THE EXPULSION OF 25 KGB AGENTS
FROM LONDON HAS THUS BEEN ADDED THE RETALIATION WHICH WE MIGHT
HAVE EXPECTED IF THE EXFILTRATION HAD MISFIRED. THIS IS A POTENT
COMBINATION, EFFECTIVELY DISABLING THIS EMBASSY IN THE SHORT TERM
AND CARRYING THE IMPLICATION THAT ANGLO-SOVIET RELATIONS WILL
BE IN THE FREEZER FOR AT LEAST A YEAR AND POSSIBLY LONGER.

3. IT FOLLOWS THAT WE SHOULD BE CONCENTRATING NOT ON THE IMMEDIATE OR SHORT-TERM SITUATION BUT ON THE SITUATION ONE YEAR OR MORE HENCE. NOTHING WHICH WE MIGHT NOW DO BY WAY OF COUNTER-RETALIATION, THREATENED OR ACTUAL, COULD MAKE OUR SITUATION OVER THE NEXT TWELVE MONTHS ANY BETTER; IT COULD, HOWEVER, MAKE IT WORSE OR PROLONG BEYOND TWELVE MONTHS THE PERIOD OF FREEZE. THE NATURAL DESIRE FOR COUNTER-RETALIATION AND THE POLITICAL NEED 'NOT TO BE SEEN TO BE TAKING IT LYING DOWN' CAN PERHAPS BE ASSUAGED IN BOTH ITS PRIVATE AND ITS PUBLIC MANIFESTATIONS, BY THE FOLLOWING LINE OF THOUGHT. WE HAVE ACHIEVED AN EXTRAORDINARY VICTORY OVER THE MOST FORMIDABLE DIMENSIONS OF SOVIET POWER: WE HAVE BOTH TAPPED THE ARTERIES OF THE KGB'S EXTERNAL INTELLIGENCE OPERATION AND, THROUGH ACTS OF REMARKABLE PERSONAL COURAGE AND PHYSICAL BRAVERY, THWARTED THE ENTIRE APPARATUS OF SOVIET INTERNAL SECURITY - KGB MILITIA, FRONTIER GUARDS, THE LOT. WE HAVE AS A RESULT, A COMPENDIUM OF KNOWLEDGE OF THE KGB'S STRUCTURE AND MODUS OPERANDI SEMI COLON A DETAILED IDENTIKIT OF THE KGB'S OPERATIONS. IN THE UK, ENABLING US COMPREHENSIVELY TO FRUSTRATE THEM, PROBABLY FOR YEARS SEMI COLON AND THE MORAL SUCCESS REPRESENTED BY BRINGING OUR INFORMANT TO SAFETY AND FREEDOM WHEN HE HOISTED HIS STORM-CONE. FOR THIS, WE HAVE PAID A HEAVY BUT IN MY VIEW BY NO MEANS EXORBITANT PRICE. THE DAMAGE TO OUR EMBASSY CAN BE MADE GOOD OVER A PERIOD, DURING WHICH UK/SOVIET RELATIONS ARE IN ANY CASE LIKELY TO BE MORIBUND SEMI COLON THE DAMAGE TO OUR MEDIA REPRESENTATION IN MOSCOW IS LIKELY, IN THE END, TO HURT THE RUSSIANS MORE THAN US - BY FUELLING ANTI-SOVIET PREDISPOSITIONS. THE HEAVIEST PRICE WILL PROBABLY BE PAID BY BRITISH INDUSTRY: WE SHALL UNDOUBTEDLY LOSE CONTRACTS AND THEREFORE JOBS - EVEN SO, I WOULD THIS EVENING ASSESS THE SCORE-BOARD AS STANDING AT 3 - 1 IN FAVOUR OF THE UK. I AM CONFIDENT THAT AN OBJECTIVE SOVIET ASSESSMENT (IF THERE IS SUCH A THING) WOULD COME TO A VERY SIMILAR CONCLUSION.

4. IF THIS IS A VALID CALCULATION OF PROFIT AND LOSS, WE CAN IN MY VIEW DISPENSE WITH THE INDULGENCE OF COUNTER-RETALIATION. FURTHER PULSIONS WILL ONLY FIND THEIR ECHO HERE AND PERHAPS CRIPPLE THIS EMBASSY BEYOND EARLY REPAIR. MORE STRINGENT TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS IN LONDON WILL ALSO BE HATCHED HERE

AND UNFAIRLY STRAINING THE MORALE OF THE STAFF OF THIS EMBASSY DURING WHAT WILL IN ANY CASE BE A PERIOD OF STRESS AND DIFFICULTY. ABOVE ALL - AND I CANNOT EMPHASISE THIS POINT TOO STRONGLY - TO WITHDRAW OR DIMINISH OUR PROPOSALS ON CEILINGS WOULD SERVE ONLY TO ENSURE THAT WHEN WE EMERGE FROM THE FREEZER IN A YEAR OR SO'S TIME, WE SHALL EMERGE WITH A LARGE MILLSTONE ROUND OUR NECKS, A MILLSTONE OF OUR OWN MAKING - A RECIPROCAL LIMITATION ON DIPLOMATIC STAFF LEVELS WHICH WOULD PREVENT THIS EMBASSY FROM OPERATING EFFECTIVELY EVEN WHEN THE BILATERAL POLITICAL CLIMATE MAKES THIS FEASIBLE. I AM VERY FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT WE SHOULD ALLOW THE OFFER OF AN INCREASE IN THE SOVIET EMBASSY'S DIPLOMATIC CEILING, TO 46, TO STAND: WE NEED NOT DO SO DEMONSTRATIVELY BUT SIMPLY LEAVE IT ON THE TABLE. THIS, IN ABOUT A YEAR'S TIME, WILL BE THE CRUCIAL INGREDIENT FOR A RETURN TO NORMALITY IN UK/SOVIET RELATIONS. IF WE WERE NOW TO REMOVE OR DILUTE THAT INGREDIENT, NORMALITY MIGHT WELL ELUDE US FOR A LONG TIME.

5. TO SUM UP, MY FIRM RECOMMENDATION - EVEN WITH SUSLOV'S VENOM STILL FRESH IN MY EARS - IS THAT WE SHOULD ALLOW MATTERS TO REST WHERE THEY ARE SEMI COLON AND TO CONCENTRATE ON THE GRADUAL RECONSTRUCTION OF OUR DIPLOMATIC ASSETS. I REALISE THAT IN DOMESTIC POLITICAL TERMS THIS MAY BE AN UNCOMFORTABLE RECOMMENDATION. BUT IT SHOULD, I BELIEVE, BE POSSIBLE TO DEVISE A PUBLIC LINE WHICH, WITHOUT UNDUE GLOATING, MAXIMISES OUR SUCCESS WHILE MINIMISING THE PRICE WHICH HAS BEEN EXACTED FOR IT. IN THE EYES OF THE PUBLIC, DIPLOMATS ARE IN ANY CASE A PRETTY EXPENDIBLE COMMODITY.

CARTLEDGE

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