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## OVATION: RECORD OF MEETING WITH THE PRIME MINISTER OF NEW ZEALAND

1. On 27 August, OVATION had a two hour meeting with the Prime Minister of New Zealand, Mr David LANGE. The Director of the New Zealand Security and Intelligence Service and one of our friends' officers were also present.

2. Mr LANGE opened the discussion by expressing contempt for statements made by the Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister, KAPITSA, during a press conference at the end of his visit to New Zealand. Mr LANGE had been so irritated by what he referred to as KAPITSA's offer of possible military cooperation with New Zealand that he had immediately issued a press statement announcing that "the best cooperation we can have from the Soviet Union is to have their vessels as far away from New Zealand as ours are from Russia". As a propaganda exercise, KAPITSA's visit had been counter-productive - another example of Soviet inability to understand the general attitude and temperament of the New Zealand people. If the Russians did have a strategy towards New Zealand, Mr LANGE had yet to see any evidence of its effectiveness. The Soviet Embassy seemed to spend most of its time cultivating the most ineffectual and discredited political and trade union figures. Though often the noisiest, few of them had any real influence. Mr LANGE had a firm belief in the resilience of democracy in New Zealand and in the good sense of its people. One of his early memories was of the public rejoicing when STALIN died. If the Soviet Union wanted New Zealand they would have to take it by force of arms. It was inconceivable that a majority of the people would willingly hand the country over to Soviet domination.

3. OVATION gave an account of the Soviet state, emphasizing its totally anti-democratic nature, the leadership's pursuit of power for its own sake, the expansionist nature of Soviet foreign policy and the ability to work consistently for long-term objectives. Moscow had no illusions that New Zealand would become a client state in the foreseeable future. Its current aim was to use all possible means to limit the US military presence in the Pacific. New Zealand's rejection of the

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ANZUS agreement and its support for a nuclear free zone in the South Pacific were in line with the Soviet aim of damaging the Western alliance. With its preponderance of land-based, strategic missiles, the Soviet Union's main purpose in promoting nuclear-free zones was to limit the military effectiveness of the US, which had greater dependence on sea-based missiles.

4. Mr Lange again referred to the Soviet lack of success in making capital of this situation. In giving expression to Soviet policy in the Pacific during the Vladivostok speech, GORBACHOV had been photographed against a background of ships which were visibly capable of carrying nuclear weapons. This was hardly the way to capture the hearts and minds of the New Zealand people. OVATION acknowledged that the Soviet leaders had little knowledge of or exposure to the democratic process but in his experience, Soviet propaganda campaigns, however derided by Western commentators, always managed to make some converts. The same methods would be deployed against the New Zealand Labour Party. By beginning with the easiest elements on the extreme left, the aim would be to work inwards to try to establish influence over the leading members of the Labour Party caucus. The process might take 10 or 20 years but the Soviet Union would not be discouraged by lack of short term success. The invitations to visit the Soviet Union, which had recently been accepted by the President of the Party, Margaret Wilson, and the General Secretary, Tony Timms, were indications that this process was now under way. OVATION referred to his own surprise that in researching the major KGB successes of the 1930s to 1960s, he had discovered that the best and brightest agents had often been recruited by dull officers, lacking in cultural and linguistic distinction.

5. In discussion of the overall Soviet strategy towards New

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Zealand, OVATION said that on the basis of his talks with the NZSIS, he thought that for the immediate future there was unlikely to be a serious threat from the KGB legal Residency in New Zealand. Tight ceiling restrictions had kept numbers so low that the KGB would find it difficult to function effectively. Such was the competition for available slots that there was apparently no GRU presence in New Zealand: hence the strenuous efforts of the Russians to establish an Aeroflot office. This was very unusual for a country of growing strategic importance to the Soviet Union. The risk came from the targeting and possible recruitment of New Zealand diplomats and officials working overseas, particularly in Moscow where the Second Chief Directorate could call on unlimited resources. He thought it unlikely that illegals would be used in New Zealand to gather political information - an area in which they were traditionally weak - but would probably be used to run any New Zealand officials recruited abroad, who were unable to travel extensively after their return home.

6. In the short term, the main thrust of Soviet strategy towards New Zealand was likely to be standard and predictable. OVATION confirmed that the recent spate of Soviet cultural, scientific, academic and sporting visits to New Zealand had nothing to do with GORBACHOV's supposed new style diplomacy but was entirely the result of the Soviet wish to take full advantage of current New Zealand policies. The complement to this was the increasing number of invitations to Labour Party members and officials to visit the USSR, Cuba and Nicaragua.

7. OVATION referred to KGB instructions, following Mr LANGE's election to office, urgently requesting Residencies to find contacts and agents who would be willing to go to New Zealand and other countries of the South Pacific region to promote non-nuclear, peace policies. It came as no surprise to him that some of the most vocal advocates of such policies had been neither New Zealanders nor Russians but Americans and Canadians. OVATION spoke of Soviet involvement with the US Director of Information, Admiral LAROQUE, which to his knowledge went back to the mid 1970s (LAROQUE has links with the British based group, Generals for Peace).

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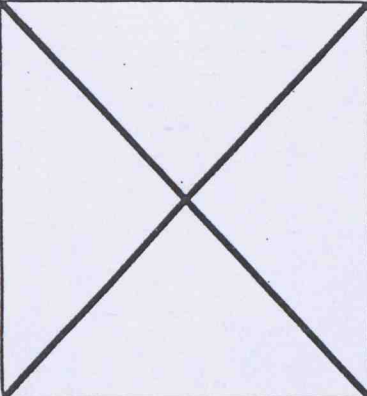
8. Mr LANGE said that the Soviet move which had caused him the greatest difficulty with his party, was the moratorium on the testing of nuclear weapons. He was under increasing pressure to issue statements supporting the move and was finding it difficult to put up counter arguments.

9. With regard to overall Soviet strategy in the region, Mr LANGE was more immediately concerned about Soviet influence in the South Pacific Islands than in New Zealand. The Soviet Union was consolidating its diplomatic and commercial position and a number of senior officials in newly created states and administrations would almost certainly be regarded as soft targets. He thought that it would be prudent for the New Zealand government to pay more attention to developments in the Islands, to counter communist-inspired activities.

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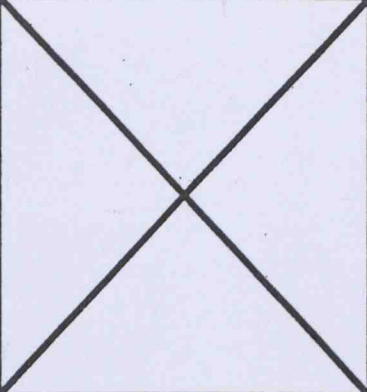
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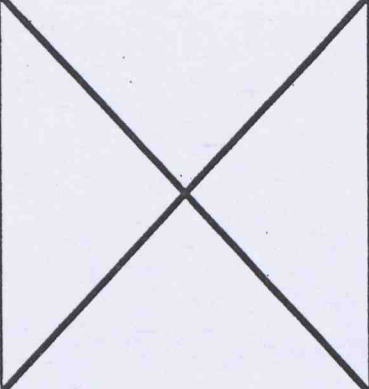
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