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UNCLASSIFIED
FM MOSCOW
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OF 110700Z MARCH 87

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PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT: COMMENT OF SOVIET GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN

1. FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF THE TASS REPORT OF REMARKS MADE BY THE SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN AT A ROUTINE PRESS CONFERENCE ON 10 MARCH:

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE USSR FOREIGN MINISTRY EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THE COMING VISIT OF BRITISH PRIME MINISTER MARGARET THATCHER TO THE SOVIET UNION WILL BRING RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES TO A NEW LEVEL, WILL STEP UP A POLITICAL DIALOGUE AND INTERACTION ON INTERNATIONAL PROBLEMS.

SPEAKING AT A PRESS CONFERENCE TODAY, HE EMPHASIZED THAT HOPES IN MOSCOW FOR SERIOUS ADVANCE PRECISELY IN THIS DIRECTION OF COOPERATION, AN ARRANGEMENT ON WHOSE MAIN CONTOURS WAS REACHED DURING THE CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN MIKHAIL GORBACHYEV AND THE BRITISH PRIME MINISTER IN DECEMBER 1984 ARE LINKED TO MARGARET THATCHER'S VISIT. +WE PROCEED FROM THE RECOGNITION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF A DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE LEADERS OF THE TWO COUNTRIES NOT ONLY ON BILATERAL RELATIONS, BUT ALSO ON BURNING PROBLEMS OF THE PRESENT+, THE SPOKESMAN FOR THE USSR FOREIGN MINISTRY SAID.

+WE BELIEVE THAT AMONG THESE PROBLEMS SPECIAL ATTENTION MUST BE PAID AND UNDELAYED VIGOROUS EFFORTS EXERTED TOWARD PREVENTING THE SPREAD OF THE ARMS RACE TO SPACE, SUBSTANTIALLY LOWERING THE LEVEL OF STRATEGIC NUCLEAR CONFRONTATION AND WORKING TOWARD RIDDING EUROPE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS+.

+THE EXPERIENCE OF OUR RELATIONS SHOWS THAT GIVEN SERIOUS INTENTIONS AND A FIRM POLITICAL WILL OF BOTH SIDES, SOVIET-BRITISH INTERACTION MAY ASSUME REAL STRENGTH, MAY HELP FIND SOLUTIONS TO AFOREMENTIONED PROBLEMS AS WELL AS OTHER PROBLEMS, SUCH AS, FOR INSTANCE, A BAN ON CHEMICAL WEAPONS, THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION REGIME, REDUCTION OF CONVENTIONAL ARMAMENTS AND CONSOLIDATION OF THE EUROPEAN PROCESS+

/17.

+IT IS HOPED IN MOSCOW THAT THE COMING TALKS WILL GIVE A MARKED
IMPETUS TOWARD PRACTICAL DEVELOPMENT OF BILATERAL RELATIONS IN
VARIOUS SPHERES,+

CARTLEDGE

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