

US/SOVIET ARMS CONTROL TALKS | EAST WEST US | SOVIET RELATIONS

PS
 PS/LADY YOUNG
 PS/MR RENTON
 PS/PUS
 MR DEREK THOMAS
 MR GOODALL
 MR RATFORD
 MR ~~WATSON~~ DAUNT
 MR FEARN

MR POWELL, NO 10 DOWNING ST

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PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT: SOVIET PRESS COMMENT

SUMMARY

1. SOVIET PRESS COMMENT HAS REMAINED LOW KEY BUT THE TONE HAS BEEN MAINLY POSITIVE. AN UPBEAT ARTICLE IN IZVESTIA OF 25 MARCH ON JOHN BROWN ENGINEERING. PROFILE OF THE PRIME MINISTER IN LITERATURNAYA GAZETA OF 25 MARCH.

DETAIL

2. IZVESTIA'S LONDON CORRESPONDENT KRMVOPALOV PUBLISHED AN ARTICLE ON 25 MARCH CONTAINING A HISTORY OF JOHN BROWN ENGINEERING, EMPHASISING THE STRONG LINKS BETWEEN THE COMPANY AND THE SOVIET UNION OVER 130 YEARS, INCLUDING A REFERENCE TO THE DIFFICULTIES OVER THE PIPELINE PROJECT WHICH HAD REQUIRED NOT ONLY THE EFFORTS OF JOHN BROWN BUT 'POLITICAL WILL IN LONDON' TO RESOLVE. HE RECORDED JOHN BROWN'S EXPERTISE IN THE 'UNIPOL' PROCESS FOR POLYPROPELENE PRODUCTION NOTING THAT IT HAD GREAT ADVANTAGES OVER ITS COMPETITORS. KRMVOPALOV NOTED ITS SUITABILITY FOR SOVIET NEEDS AND THAT A SIGNIFICANT PART OF THE EQUIPMENT COULD BE MADE IN THE SOVIET UNION. THERE IS ALSO A FAVOURABLE REFERENCE TO JOHN BROWN'S 'COMBINED CYCLE' GAS TURBINES.

3. PRAVDA OF 26 MARCH REPORTED THE LATEST MEETING OF THE BRITISH/SOVIET CHAMBER OF COMMERCE. IT WAS NOTED THAT TRADE, ECONOMIC, SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL LINKS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES COULD PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN DEVELOPING BILATERAL RELATIONS. THERE WERE STILL UNTAPPED RESERVES IN TRADE. GOREACHEV'S 1984 TARGET TO INCREASE TRADE BY 40-50% WAS NOTED. THE RECENT SIGNING OF THE ANGLO/SOVIET CREDIT AGREEMENT PROVIDED

THE RECENT SIGNING OF THE ANGLO/SOVIET CREDIT AGREEMENT PROVIDED A GOOD BASIS FOR FURTHER ECONOMIC AND INDUSTRIAL COOPERATION.

4. INTERATURNAYA GAZETA OF 25 MARCH PUBLISHED A LENGTHY AND ESSENTIALLY SYMPHETIC PROFILE OF THE PRIME MINISTER TOGETHER WITH A PHOTOGRAPH. THE ARTICLE COVERED HER EARLY CAREER, THE EVENTS AND ATTITUDES WHICH HAD INFLUENCED HER PHILOSOPHY AND ACTIONS. IT IS SURPRISINGLY FRANK ABOUT THE INGREDIENTS OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S SUCCESS, NOTING THE APPEAL OF POPULAR CAPITALISM EVEN FOR WORKING CLASS VOTERS, THE LACK OF VOTER APPEAL IN BOTH THE ALLIANCE AND LABOUR PARTY AND THE PRIME MINISTER'S DECISIVE AND COMPETENT STYLE. THE PRIME MINISTER'S COMMITMENT TO NATO AND THE US CONNECTION WAS ALSO NOTED. THE ARTICLE ALSO DRAWS ATTENTION TO THE PRIME MINISTER'S ACKNOWLEDGEMENT THAT THE SOVIET UNION HAD A RIGHT TO EQUAL SECURITY. THE PRIME MINISTER'S WORDS ALLOWED HOPE THAT ANGLO/SOVIET COOPERATION WOULD DEVELOP AND THAT THE FORTHCOMING VISIT WOULD PROVIDE A POWERFUL IMPULSE. ACCORDING TO THE BRITISH PRESS, THE TORRES REGARDED THE VISIT AS IMPORTANT IN GENERAL ELECTION TERMS. IN THIS RESPECT RECENT FAVOURABLE ECONOMIC INDICATORS (AND THE BUDGET) ALSO PROVIDED THE TORRES WITH SOME ENCOURAGEMENT. THE ARTICLE CONCLUDED BY SUGGESTING THAT THE SUCCESS OR DOWNFALL OF THE TORRES DEPENDED GREATLY ON THEIR FOREIGN POLICY AND ON THE PREPAREDNESS TO DEMONSTRATE TO THE ELECTORS NEW POLITICAL THINKING WHICH ALONE WAS WORTHY OF GREAT STATESMEN IN THE NUCLEAR AGE.

5. DEPUTY SOVIET MFA SPOKESMAN PYADISHEV GAVE A BRIEFING TODAY 26 MARCH IN WHICH HE SAID THAT TALKS WOULD CONCENTRATE ON ENDING THE ARMS RACE, STRENGTHENING SECURITY, AND EUROPEAN COOPERATION. THE TALKS WOULD GIVE AN IMPULSE TO "MORE DYNAMIC PRACTICAL COOPERATION".

6. ON THE NEGATIVE SIDE THE WEEKLY "NEW TIMES" IN ITS LATEST EDITION PUBLISHES AN INTERVIEW WITH TONY BENN WHICH SLATES THE TORRES FOR PUTTING CAPITALIST PROFITS BEFORE THE INTERESTS OF PEOPLE, EXCESSIVE MILITARY SPENDING, A PREMEDITATED RISE IN UNEMPLOYMENT, ANTI-LABOUR LEGISLATION AND BRITAIN'S HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD (NORTHERN IRELAND, MICHAEL HICKS). THE MAGAZINE REPORTS ON THE SAME PAGE, HOWEVER, THE PRIME MINISTER MEETING CHERNOBYL FIREMAN TELYATNIKOV. VARIOUS TABS REPORTS HAVE PICKED UP "SOCIAL INEQUALITIES" IN BRITAIN AND THE 15 TH ANNIVERSARY OF LONDON'S "DIRECT RULE" IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

COMMENT

7. THE JOHN BROWN ARTICLE IS AS FAVOURABLE AN OMEN AS WE COULD HOPE FOR. THE PROFILE OF THE PRIME MINISTER IS IN MOST RESPECTS FAIR AND IN PLACES FLATTERING. IT IS I THINK THE MOST DETAILED, OPEN, AND POSITIVE PROFILE OF A MAJOR WESTERN LEADER TO APPEAR IN THE CENTRAL SOVIET PRESS.

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