

Restricted

RESTRICTED
 FM MOSCOW
 TO DESKBY 070800Z F C O
 TELNO 582
 OF 070445Z APRIL 87
 INFO PRIORITY PRAGUE

mb

YOUR TELNO 477: GORBACHEV'S VISIT TO PRAGUE

1. THE ONLY NEWS IN THE SOVIET MEDIA OF THE POSTPONEMENT WAS CARRIED BY THE SOVIET TV NEWS PROGRAMME VREMYA ON 5 APRIL AND DATELINED PRAGUE. THE PUBLICATION OF IZVESTIA ON 6 APRIL WHICH WAS PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED ON 5 APRIL AS TO BE HELD OVER (PROBABLY TO ACCOMMODATE DEPARTURE PHOTOGRAPH AND SPEECHES) ALSO POINTS TO A SUDDEN DECISION TO POSTPONE.

2. THE CZECH EMBASSY HERE WILL NOT GO BEYOND THE 'SLIGHT COLD' REASON AND SPECULATION AROUND THE TOWN RANGES FROM CZECH OR SOVIET MILITARY RESISTANCE TO THE POSSIBLE ANNOUNCEMENT OF TROOP WITHDRAWALS DURING THE VISIT TO CZECH ANNOYANCE WITH A REQUEST BY GORBACHEV TO MEET DUBCEK.

3. MY OWN GUESS IS THAT THERE MIGHT HAVE BEEN SOME LAST MINUTE DISAGREEMENT WITHIN THE LEADERSHIP HERE ON THE LINE TO TAKE OVER 'PERESTROIKA' IN EASTERN EUROPE. GORBACHEV'S VISIT TO PRAGUE IS NOT ONLY IMPORTANT FOR THE SEASON BUT IT WILL BE HIS FIRST TO AN EASTERN EUROPE COUNTRY FOLLOWING THE JANUARY PLENUM.

4. I MAY HAVE SOME SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION WHICH COULD REACH YOU BY 1300Z ON 7 APRIL IF ANYTHING EMERGES FROM MY MEETING WITH MY US, FRENCH AND FRG COLLEAGUES WHICH BEGINS AT 0700Z

CARTLEDGE

YYYY

MXHPAN 9097

LIMITED

SOVIET D

EED

PLANNING STAFF

INFO D

NEWS D

PUSD

PS

PS/MR RENTON

PS/PUS

MR THOMAS

MR RAYFORD.

*cc. Mr Powell, No. 10**W. J. Powell
7/4.***Restricted**