

RESTRICTED

033570  
MDHIAN 9549

*The Russian gave a  
very full briefing.  
CD.*

RESTRICTED

FM MOSCOW

TO DESKBY 081700Z FCO

TELNO 1745

OF 081515Z DECEMBER 87

INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON, BONN, PARIS, UKDEL NATO

INFO ROUTINE UKDEL CSCE VIENNA

GORBACHEV'S VISIT TO THE U.K.: SOVIET PRESS COVERAGE *mt*

SUMMARY

1. PRIME COVERAGE ON SOVIET TV DURING THE EVENING OF 7 DECEMBER AND SUBSTANTIAL FRONT-PAGE REPORTS WITH PHOTOGRAPHS IN PRAVDA AND IZVESTIYA ON 8 DECEMBER. AS IN SOVIET REPORTING OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO THE SOVIET UNION IN MARCH THE REPORTING COVERED SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES AND DID NOT GLOSS OVER DIFFERENCES, WHILE ASSESSING THE OUTCOME POSITIVELY.

DETAIL

TV

2. GORBACHEV'S VISIT DOMINATED BOTH THE MAIN SOVIET EVENING NEWS PROGRAMME 'VREMYA' (PROVIDING OVER HALF ITS 40 MINUTE RUNNING TIME) AND THE LATE NIGHT FOREIGN NEWS PROGRAMME WHICH INCLUDED BRIEF FAVOURABLE INTERVIEWS WITH MEMBERS OF THE BRITISH PUBLIC.

PRESS

3. BOTH TV AND NEWSPAPERS USED THE SAME TASS REPORT, IN WHICH THE MAIN POINTS WERE:

ATMOSPHERE

(A) THE MEETING WAS A CONTINUATION OF THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE TWO LEADERS AND HELD IN THE CUSTOMARILY FRANK, FRIENDLY AND OPEN MANNER.

PERESTROIKA

(B) BOTH SIDES REAFFIRMED THEIR VIEW OF THE IMPORTANCE OF PERESTROIKA BOTH FOR BILATERAL RELATIONS AND MORE GENERALLY



RESTRICTED

033570  
MDHIAN 9549

IN THE FIELD OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS. GORBACHEV DESCRIBED THE CURRENT PHASE OF DEVELOPMENT IN PERESTROIKA INCLUDING THE ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL DIFFICULTIES. HOWEVER HE STRESSED THAT THE ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT OF AN INCREASING NUMBER OF SECTORS OF THE SOVIET POPULATION WAS A MAJOR FACTOR IN MAKING PERESTROIKA IRREVERSIBLE.

#### BILATERAL TRADE

- (C) A DETAILED DISCUSSION. GORBACHEV STRESSED THE NEED FOR BRITISH PROJECTS AND BIDS TO BE MORE COMPETITIVE SINCE THIS PROBLEM CONTINUED TO LOSE MAJOR CONTRACTS FOR BRITISH COMPANIES IN THE SOVIET UNION. THERE WAS "EVERY CHANCE" OF ACHIEVING THE TARGET FOR TRADE SET DURING THE PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO MOSCOW. THIS ISSUE WOULD CONTINUE TO RECEIVE THE CLOSEST ATTENTION OF BOTH SIDES.

#### BILATERAL GENERAL

- (D) GORBACHEV NOTED THAT GENERALLY OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS DURING RECENT YEARS HAD BECOME MORE DYNAMIC. DESPITE REAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, MRS THATCHER'S CONSTRUCTIVE ATTITUDE WAS AN IMPORTANT AND VERY VALUABLE ELEMENT IN THIS PROCESS.

#### ARMS CONTROL - INF AND THE EUROPEAN ROLE

- (E) BOTH SIDES EMPHASISED THAT THE INF AGREEMENT WAS NOT ONLY A RESULT OF THE EFFORTS OF THE SOVIET UNION AND THE USA BUT ALSO DUE TO THE FACT THAT THEY HAD ACTED IN AGREEMENT WITH THEIR ALLIES. HERE GORBACHEV EMPHASISED EUROPE'S ROLE, SAYING THAT WHEN THE WORLD WAS MAKING A NEW TURN IN TERMS OF REAL DISARMAMENT, MOVING FROM CONFRONTATION TO A CONSOLIDATION OF TRENDS TOWARDS COOPERATION, EUROPE'S ROLE WAS NOT ONLY INDISPENSABLE BUT INCREASING. MR GORBACHEV ASSURED MRS THATCHER THAT THE SOVIET UNION WOULD NEVER TAKE A STEP WHICH WOULD THREATEN EUROPE'S SECURITY, INFRINGE ITS INTERESTS OR CAUSE DESTABILIZATION.

#### CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS

- (F) GORBACHEV "EMPHASISED THE NECESSITY OF LOWERING THE LEVEL OF (ALL CATEGORIES OF) ARMAMENTS AND INVITED THE PRIME MINISTER TO INTENSIFY EFFORTS TO DEFINE MORE QUICKLY THE



RESTRICTED

033570  
MDHIAN 9549

DIRECTION AND CONTENT OF CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS TALKS'', ON THE BASIS OF THE INF NEGOTIATIONS. HE SAID IT WAS TIME TO SWITCH TALKS ON CONVENTIONAL ARMS FROM PROPAGANDA TO POLICY. ''LET US MAKE POLICY - IT IS PRECISELY IN THIS MOOD THAT I AM GOING TO THE WASHINGTON TALKS''.

START

(G) BOTH SIDES AGREED THAT VERIFICATION WAS A KEY ISSUE

ABM

(H) BOTH SIDES DECLARED FOR CONSOLIDATION OF THE TREATY ESPECIALLY ON THE NEED FOR PARTIES NOT TO USE THEIR RIGHT TO ABROGATE THE TREATY WITHIN AGREED TIME SCALES. GORBACHEV SAID THIS WAS ''AN IMPORTANT PRE-REQUISITE FOR STRATEGIC ARMS REDUCTION''.

NO! 11

#### CONCEPT OF NUCLEAR DETERRENCE

(I) THE TWO LEADERS CONTINUED THIS ''OLD DISPUTE'' AS GORBACHEV DESCRIBED IT. HE SAID ''YOU WOULD SURELY AGREE THAT IT IS BETTER TO BE SITTING IN A COZY ARM CHAIR THAN ON A POWDER KEG. WHEN NUCLEAR ARMS ARE RELIED UPON AS A MEANS OF ENSURING SECURITY THIS IS UNACCEPTABLE FROM BOTH A PHILOSOPHICAL AND PRACTICAL POINT OF VIEW. THERE ARE CERTAINLY REALITIES, AND WE FACE THEM. BUT NOW THAT THE PROCESS OF NUCLEAR ARMS REDUCTION IS ABOUT TO BE STARTED I INVITE YOU, MRS PRIME MINISTER, TO RECONSIDER THIS CONCEPT OF YOURS''.

#### CHEMICAL WEAPONS

(J) GORBACHEV SAID THAT WHILE BRITAIN HAD TAKEN AN ACTIVE STAND ''LATELY, AS WE SEE IT, THERE HAS BEEN A CERTAIN SLACKENING-OFF ON THESE ISSUES ON THE PART OF THE BRITISH SIDE''. HE AGREED WITH THE PRIME MINISTER ON THE DECISIVE NATURE OF VERIFICATION WHICH WAS DIFFICULT. HOWEVER THE SOVIET UNION WAS PREPARED TO DISCUSS AND SOLVE SUCH DIFFICULTIES JOINTLY WITH ITS PARTNERS IN THE DISCUSSIONS.

US INF RATIFICATION - SOVIET HUMAN RIGHTS PERFORMANCE LINKAGE



RESTRICTED

033570  
MDHIAN 9549

(K) MRS THATCHER NOTED THE IMPORTANCE OF ENSURING US CONGRESS RATIFICATION OF AN INF AGREEMENT LINKED WITH THE ISSUES OF 'HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE SOVIET UNION'. A 'LITTLE POLEMIC' ENSUED DURING WHICH GORBACHEV REMINDED THE PRIME MINISTER ABOUT THE UNDERSTANDING THEY HAD REACHED IN DECEMBER 1984 AT CHEQUERS THAT EACH SIDE WOULD RUN ITS DOMESTIC AFFAIRS IN ACCORDANCE WITH ITS OWN LEGISLATION AND AVOID INTERFERENCE IN THE AFFAIRS OF THE OTHER SIDE.

#### FUTURE CONTACTS

(L) AT THE END OF THE CONVERSATION BOTH LEADERS EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH THEIR CONCENTRATED, IF BRIEF, EXCHANGE OF OPINIONS AND AGREED TO CONTINUE CONTACTS IN THE FUTURE.

4. THE TASS REPORT CONCLUDED WITH VERBATIM REPORTS OF THE ANNOUNCEMENTS MADE TO THE PRESS AFTER THEIR MEETING BY BOTH THE PRIME MINISTER AND GORBACHEV.

#### MRS GORBACHEVA

5. RAISA GORBACHEVA FIGURED PROMINENTLY IN THE TV COVERAGE OF THE DEPARTURE SHAKING HANDS WITH MEMBERS OF THE POLITBURO. THE OFFICIAL DEPARTURE PHOTOGRAPH SHOWS HER STANDING IN THE FRONT ROW SEPARATED FROM HER HUSBAND BY GROMYKO AND RYZHKOV. DURING THE STOP OVER SHE WAS SHOWN SHAKING HANDS WITH THE PRIME MINISTER AND ATTENDING THE SCHOOL NATIVITY PLAY.

#### COMMENT

6. AS WITH THE PM'S VISIT TO THE USSR, THE SOVIET MEDIA COVERAGE MANAGES BOTH TO BE POSITIVE AND TO RETAIN A DEGREE OF BALANCE (STILL BY NO MEANS THE RULE). THE TELEVISION PICTURES IN PARTICULAR WILL HAVE REINFORCED THE EXISTING IMAGE HERE OF A SERIOUS, VIGOROUS AND FRIENDLY RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE GENERAL SECRETARY.

7. SEE MIFT (TO FCO ONLY)

MARSHALL

YYYY