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TO DESKBY 151600Z FCO
TELNO 1775
OF 151430Z DECEMBER 87
INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON, UKDEL NATO
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WASHINGTON SUMMIT: THE OUTCOME SEEN FROM MOSCOW

SUMMARY

1. THE SUMMIT ADEQUATELY MET GORBACHEV'S POLITICAL OBJECTIVES. IN SUBSTANCE, HE CANNOT REASONABLY HAVE EXPECTED MORE THAN HE GOT. SOVIET PUBLIC REACTIONS, IMPORTANT TO HIM AT THIS TIME, HAVE BEEN SATISFACTORILY POSITIVE. BUT IN ORDER TO HEDGE AGAINST INF NON-RATIFICATION AND TO FOSTER AN IMAGE OF FIRM REALISM, HE HAS BEEN CAREFUL TO CAST HIS OWN ASSESSMENT OF THE OUTCOME IN SOBER TERMS.

DETAIL

2. GORBACHEV NEEDED A SUMMIT WHICH COULD BE REPRESENTED AS SUCCESSFUL, BEFORE THE END OF 1987, IN ORDER:

(A) TO CONSOLIDATE AND ENHANCE HIS AUTHORITY AT HOME AT THE OUTSET OF PERESTROIKA'S MOST DIFFICULT AND CRITICAL PHASE AND

(B) TO CONTRIBUTE TO GREATER VISIBLE STABILITY IN THE EAST/WEST RELATIONSHIP, THEREBY MAKING IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR SOVIET CONSERVATIVES AND THE MILITARY TO ARGUE THAT RADICAL INTERNAL CHANGE AND UPHEAVAL COULD ENDANGER NATIONAL SECURITY.

IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THESE OBJECTIVES GORBACHEV HAS BEEN PREPARED, OVER THE PAST YEAR, TO MAKE A SERIES OF CONCESSIONS TO US AND WESTERN POSITIONS ON ARMS CONTROL, CULMINATING IN HIS ACCEPTANCE OF A SUMMIT AT WHICH ONLY THE INF TREATY WOULD BE SIGNED.

3. THE OUTCOME OF THE WASHINGTON SUMMIT ADEQUATELY MEETS GORBACHEV'S REQUIREMENTS BUT WITHOUT MUCH TO SPARE. UKDEL NATO TELNOS 403 AND 404 (RECEIVED ONLY ON 15 DECEMBER) MAKE IT CLEAR THAT RATHER MORE WAS ACHIEVED IN WASHINGTON THAN GORBACHEV IS ABLE OR WILLING TO DISCLOSE IN PUBLIC. BUT THE AGREEMENTS AND UNDERSTANDINGS IN THE PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS ARE NEVERTHELESS SUFFICIENTLY SUBSTANTIAL TO IMPRESS BOTH EXPERT AND GRASS-ROOTS OPINION IN THE SOVIET UNION: APART FROM THE SIGNATURE OF A TREATY WHICH IN ITSELF CONSTITUTES A MAJOR BREAKTHROUGH IN ARMS CONTROL, GORBACHEV SECURED US AGREEMENT TO A LIMIT (IN THE CONTEXT OF START) ON SLCMS, SUBJECT TO SATISFACTORY VERIFICATION, AND US ACCEPTANCE OF MOBILE SYSTEMS. AGAINST THIS, GORBACHEV FAILED TO ACHIEVE THE DEGREE OF SPECIFICITY WHICH HE WOULD HAVE LIKED ON ABMT ADHERENCE: AS HE MADE CLEAR IN HIS TV ADDRESS (MY TELNO 1773) THE SDI PROBLEM REMAINS, IN THE SOVIET VIEW, UNRESOLVED. HE CANNOT HAVE EXPECTED ANY MORE THAN HE GOT ON NUCLEAR TESTING (PRE-COOKED IN GENEVA), ON CW (GIVEN CURRENT WESTERN HESITATIONS) OR ON CONVENTIONAL FORCE REDUCTIONS (NOT SUSCEPTIBLE TO BILATERAL TREATMENT).

4. MORE GENERALLY, THE MERE FACT OF THE SIGNATURE OF A HISTORIC ARMS CONTROL AGREEMENT AND THE DAILY SPECTACLE OF THE SOVIET AND US LEADERS IN BUSINESSLIKE AND AMIABLE DISCUSSION HAS, I THINK, BEEN RECEIVED BY THE SOVIET PUBLIC AT LARGE WITH RELIEF AND EVEN ENTHUSIASM. ORDINARY SOVIET PEOPLE WILL HAVE BEEN ENCOURAGED TO SEE THEIR LEADER GIVING SUCH AN OBVIOUSLY GOOD ACCOUNT OF HIMSELF ON SUPPOSEDLY HOSTILE TERRITORY. THE SUMMIT HAS PROBABLY RESTORED GORBACHEV'S AUTHORITY TO ITS PRE-ELTSIN LEVEL: GIVEN THE DOMESTIC DIFFICULTIES WHICH LIE AHEAD, THIS IS IMPORTANT TO HIM.

5. GORBACHEV HAD NEVERTHELESS THOUGHT IT PRUDENT TO ESCHEW SELF-CONGRATULATION AND TO DAMP DOWN ANY TENDENCIES TO EUPHORIA. HIS TV ADDRESS (LIKE HIS Demeanour AT THE AIRPORT ON HIS RETURN) WAS SOBER AND RESTRAINED. THE POSSIBILITY THAT HIS OBJECTIVES MAY YET BE FRUSTRATED BY A BLOCKING THIRD ON RATIFICATION IN THE US SENATE CLEARLY WORRIES HIM AND HE IS MAKING IT CLEAR THAT HE TAKES NOTHING FOR GRANTED. HE IS ALSO CONCERNED TO SHOW THAT AFTER THREE DAYS IN WASHINGTON HE IS STILL CLEAR-EYED ABOUT US REALITIES, AS HE SEES THEM, AND THAT AMERICAN HOSPITALITY HAS NOT SOFTENED HIM UP. HIS TONE OF REALISM AND FIRMNESS IS DOUBTLESS DESIGNED TO REINSURE THE UNITY AND SUPPORT OF HIS POLITBURO COLLEAGUES, WHICH WILL BE CRUCIAL DURING THE DIFFICULT MONTHS AHEAD.

6. THE FORMAL SOVIET EVALUATION OF THE WASHINGTON SUMMIT MUST AWAIT THE POLITBURO'S MEETING ON 17 DECEMBER: BUT I SHALL BE SURPRISED IF ITS TERMS REQUIRE MODIFICATION OF THE FOREGOING ASSESSMENT.

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TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELNO 1773

OF 151300Z DECEMBER 87

INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON, MODUK

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MY TELNO 1767: GORBACHEV'S TV ADDRESS ON THE SUMMIT

SUMMARY

1. GORBACHEV ADDRESSED THE SOVIET PEOPLE ON 14 DECEMBER. HIS SPEECH WAS SHORT, AND DELIVERED IN A SUBDUED, SOMBRE STYLE. A CLEVER PRESENTATION OF A DIFFICULT BRIEF. HE AVOIDED THE DETAIL OF THE DISCUSSIONS AND MADE MUCH OF THE ATMOSPHERICS, ESPECIALLY THE DIFFICULTIES, PROBABLY IN AN ATTEMPT TO DAMPEN PUBLIC EXPECTATIONS OF EARLY ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE WHOLE RANGE OF US/SOVIET RELATIONS. HE SAID JUST ENOUGH TO DISPEL ANY POPULAR DOUBTS AS TO WHETHER THE TRIP WAS WORTHWHILE.

DETAIL

2. GORBACHEV ADDRESSED THE NATION DURING THE MAIN EVENING NEWS BULLETIN ON 14 DECEMBER. THERE WAS NO PRE-PUBLICITY. THE SPEECH WAS SHORT BY HIS STANDARDS (AND COMPARED WITH HIS BROADCASTS POST-REYKJAVIK), BUT BY CHOOSING A SOMBRE MEASURED DELIVERY, HE MANAGED TO SPIN IT OUT TO 20 MINUTES.

3. GORBACHEV BEGAN BY EMPHASISING THE DETAILED GROUND-WORK AND CONSULTATION WHICH HAD MARKED SOVIET PREPARATION FOR THE SUMMIT, NOT JUST WITHIN THE PARTY BUT WITH THE ALLIES AND A SPECTRUM OF WORLD OPINION. 'ALL THIS ENRICHED OUR VISION OF THE PROCESSES UNDERWAY IN THE WORLD, AND GAVE ADDED CONFIDENCE THAT WE WERE GOING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. IN THIS WAY, WE WENT TO WASHINGTON WITH A MANDATE FROM OUR PEOPLE, AND OUR ALLIES AND TAKING ACCOUNT OF THE ATTITUDES AND WISHES OF MILLIONS OF PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD'. SOVIET POSITIONS HAD BEEN THE SUBJECT OF DISCUSSION IN THE POLITBURO

ON MORE THAN ONE OCCASION.

ARMS CONTROL

4. GORBACHEV DEALT QUITE BRIEFLY WITH THE ARMS CONTROL AGREEMENTS. THE CONTENT AND RESULTS OF THE VISIT WERE WELL KNOWN. THE INF TREATY HAD BEEN SIGNED, 'A MAJOR EVENT IN WORLD HISTORY, A VICTORY FOR THE NEW POLITICAL THINKING'. MOST OF THE TIME IN THE TALKS HAD BEEN DEVOTED TO START. THE JOINT STATEMENT REFLECTED 'WILLINGNESS TO CUT STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS BY 50% WHILE OBSERVING THE ABM TREATY IN THE FORM IN WHICH IT WAS ADOPTED ('PRINYAT') IN 1972. WE AGAIN PUT CLEARLY THE QUESTION OF THE NEED TO CONCLUDE AN EARLY AGREEMENT ON A COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR TEST BAN. WE HAD A THOROUGH DISCUSSION ON LIQUIDATION OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS AND THE REDUCTION OF CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS AND FORCES IN EUROPE. GORBACHEV WENT ON TO DEFEND THE INF TREATY AGAINST THE CHARGE THAT IT ONLY DEALT WITH 4% OF THE NUCLEAR ARSENALS: '5% IS ENOUGH TO DESTROY THE WORLD.'

5. GORBACHEV THEN SAID IT WAS NECESSARY TO MAINTAIN THE ATMOSPHERE WHICH HAD ENABLED THE SIGNATURE OF THE INF TREATY. THE FIRST MOVE MUST BE FOR BOTH SIDES TO RATIFY IT. AFTER A NOD TO THE ROLE OF THE SUPREME SOVIET, HE SAID 'WE KNOW THERE IS A STRUGGLE IN THE USA OVER RATIFICATION, BUT WE ALSO KNOW THAT... THE AMERICAN PEOPLE SUPPORT THE TREATY'. HE WELCOMED PUBLIC SUPPORT FROM THE WARSAW PACT, BUT WENT ON: 'WHEN THERE IS A BREAK WITH OLD OPINIONS, OPPOSITION INEVITABLY ARISES FROM THOSE WHO ASSOCIATE THEIR POLITICAL AND MATERIAL WELL BEING WITH OPEN SQUARE BRACKETS THE OLD WAYS CLOSE SQUARE BRACKETS. ONLY THREE DAYS HAVE PASSED SINCE OUR RETURN AND ALREADY CERTAIN CIRCLES IN THE WEST ARE MOBILISING TO PREVENT A CHANGE FOR THE BETTER.' HE CITED 'COMPENSATION' AND ALSO ATTEMPTS TO SUGGEST THAT 'THE WASHINGTON SUMMIT REMOVED OUR DIFFERENCES OVER SDI. AND ON THIS BASIS THERE ARE CALLS TO PRESS AHEAD WITH THIS PROGRAMME. I SAY BLUNTLY:- THESE ARE DANGEROUS TENDENCIES AND SHOULD NOT BE UNDERESTIMATED.'

BILATERAL

6. GORBACHEV'S ACCOUNT OF THE DISCUSSION OF BILATERAL ISSUES WAS CONFINED TO GENERALITIES. THEY HAD DISCUSSED HOW TO ARRANGE THEIR RELATIONS FOR BILATERAL AND UNIVERSAL BENEFIT.

"UNDERSTANDING OF THIS HAS GROWN IN BOTH COUNTRIES. WE SAW THIS IN OUR MEETINGS WITH POLITICAL AND SOCIAL LEADERS, WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF SCIENCE AND THE ARTS. IN OUR NEGOTIATIONS WE STRESSED THE NEED TO UNDERSTAND THE NEW REALITIES AND ACT ACCORDINGLY... WE SAID THAT WE HAD NOT COME TO WASHINGTON TO INDULGE IN REPROACHES AND MUTUAL RECRIMINATIONS, WHICH THE AMERICANS HAD VERY OFTEN RESORTED TO IN THE PAST... I THINK THAT YOU ALL WILL BE INTERESTED TO LEARN WHAT THE AMERICAN REACTION WAS... I HAVE TO SAY, IF ONE TAKES A POSITION ON THE FACTS, AND DOES NOT LAPSE INTO EXAGGERATION, THEN IT IS STILL EARLY, TOO EARLY, TO TALK OF A RADICAL CHANGE IN OUR RELATIONS."

7. AFTER THAT SOBERING JUDGEMENT GORBACHEV OFFERED SOME GROUNDS FOR HOPE. THE TALKS HAD BEEN MORE CONSTRUCTIVE THAN HITHERTO, THERE WAS A RISING TIDE OF GOOD WILL TOWARDS THE SOVIET UNION IN AMERICA, AND THE RUSSIANS REGARDED AMERICA AND THE AMERICANS IN THE SAME LIGHT. HE HAD TOLD THE PRESIDENT THAT "THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP IS READY TO DIVERT OUR RELATIONS TOWARDS MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING AND CONSTRUCTIVE MUTUAL COOPERATION..." HE MADE PASSING REFERENCE TO THE AGREEMENTS REACHED ON SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION, CULTURAL EXCHANGES AND HUMAN CONTACTS, AND THE DISCUSSIONS OF ECONOMIC RELATIONS AND TRADE.

REGIONAL CONFLICTS

8. IN THIS SECTION ON POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS IN US-SOVIET RELATIONS, GORBACHEV SPOKE OF "JOINT ACTION IN RESOLVING REGIONAL CONFLICTS", WHICH THE SOVIET SIDE HAD RAISED. "ALTHOUGH WE DID NOT MAKE MUCH PROGRESS HERE, THE DISCUSSIONS SHED MORE LIGHT AND ALLOWED US TO EXPECT THE CONTINUATION OF A DIALOGUE."

INTERNAL

9. GORBACHEV CLOSED HIS ADDRESS WITH A REFERENCE TO INTERNATIONAL INTEREST IN PERESTROIKA (LAST WORD UNDERLINED). THIS UNDERLINED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SOVIET UNION IN THE MODERN WORLD AND WAS A REMINDER TO ALL OF US THAT THE QUICKER PERESTROIKA (LAST WORD UNDERLINED) IS INTRODUCED, THE QUICKER THINGS WILL MOVE IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA. AFTER SOME WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT TO THOSE ENGAGED IN THE CONCRETE DECISIONS, HE THANKED THE SOVIET PEOPLE FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO PERESTROIKA (LAST WORD UNDERLINED) AND THEIR SUPPORT FOR THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE AND

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THE GOVERNMENT. HE VISIBLY RELAXED AS HE CAME TO THE END OF HIS SPEECH.

10. COMMENT ON THE SUMMIT OUTCOME AS SEEN FROM MOSCOW FOLLOWS.

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