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UNCLASSIFIED  
DD 212300Z TOKYO  
FM MOSCO TO TOKYO  
211536Z SEP  
GRS 486

UNCLASSIFIED  
FM MOSCOW  
TO DESKBY 212300Z TOKYO  
TELNO MISC 267  
OF 211537Z SEPTEMBER 89  
AND TO IMMEDIATE FCO

PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT: TASS COMMENTARY

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF A TASS COMMENTARY BY TASS CORRESPONDENT IGOR PESKOV (WHO WAS EXPELLED IN MAY) ISSUED ON 21 SEPTEMBER PREVIEWING THE PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH MR GORBACHEV.

BEGINS

THE WORKING MEETING BETWEEN SOVIET PRESIDENT MIKHAIL GORBACHEV AND BRITISH PRIME MINISTER MARGARET THATCHER TO BE HELD IN MOSCOW ON SEPTEMBER 23 ACCORDS WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOVIET BRITISH RELATIONS OVER THE PAST FEW YEAR.

IN THE USSR, THERE IS GREAT INTEREST IN THE WORKING MEETING, BUT SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE IS ATTACHED TO DISARMAMENT ISSUES.

ALTHOUGH THE VIEWS OF THE TWO COUNTRIES DO NOT ALWAYS COINCIDE, MEETINGS BETWEEN THE LEADERS OF THE USSR AND BRIAIN HAVE GIVEN AN ADDITIONAL IMPETUS TO THE SEARCH FOR COMPROMISE AND POINTS OF CONTACT.

THE SOVIET UNION IS INTERESTED IN THE WAY THE BRITISH WILL ACT ON THE ISSUE OF REDUCING CONVENTIONAL ARMED FORCES AND ARMAMENTS IN EUROPE IN THE LIGHT OF THE NEW ROUND OF VIENNA TALKS.

THE WESTERN PLANS TO MODERNISE NUCLEAR SHORT-RANGE WEAPONS, WITH BRITAIN INSISTING ON THEIR IMPLEMENTATION, ARE WORRYING THE USSR WHICH, NATURALLY, IS INTERESTED IF THERE ARE ANY CHANGES ON THIS MATTER.

A Greer by  
Soviet officials  
on your talks  
with Mr.  
Gorbachev tomorrow.  
COP

AT THE SAME TIME MOSCOW POINTS TO THE POSITIVE ROLE PLAYED BY BRITAIN AT THE CONFERENCE ON CHEMICAL WEAPONS IN GENEVA, AND THE WORKING MEETING WILL PROBABLY DISCUSS THE PROSPECTS OF THESE TALKS. THE SOVIET UNION IS INTERESTED IN COOPERATING WITH BRITAIN IN ALL-EUROPEAN AFFAIRS. THIS IMPLIES, PRIMARILY, ADDING A PRACTICAL ASPECT TO THE +EUROPEAN HOME+ CONCEPT AND PROSPECTS OF INTEGRATION PROCESSES IN EUROPE IN CONNECTION WITH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A UNITED MARKET THERE.

SPECIAL HOPES ARE PLACED ON BILATERAL COOPERATION IN ECOLOGY, ESPECIALLY IN THE USE OF THE U.N. MECHANISM FOR A COORDINATED EFFORT TO FIGHT ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION.

THE MOSCOW MEETING WILL UNDOUBTEDLY DISCUSS SPECIFIC ISSUES OF SOVIET-BRITISH COOPERATION, SUCH AS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF JOINT VENTURES AND BRITAIN'S ASSISTANCE IN TRAINING PERSONNEL.

THIS WOULD BE A PRACTICAL REALISATION OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S WISH TO FACILITATE THE PROCESSES OF PERESTROIKA IN THE USSR, REPEATEDLY EXPRESSED BY THATCHER.

THE BRITISH PRESS IS NOW SPECULATING ON WHETHER THE MEETING BETWEEN THE TWO LEADERS WILL BE ABLE TO DISPEL THE +COOL+ IN RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES FOLLOWING THE EXPULSION OF SEVERAL SOVIET OFFICIALS FROM LONDON LAST MAY.

IN THIS LIGHT IT IS APPROPRIATE TO OBSERVE THAT EACH COUNTRY HAS THE RIGHT TO DECIDE WHO SHOULD REPRESENT ITS INTERESTS ABROAD, WHICH IS IN KEEPING WITH STANDARDS OF CIVILISED RELATIONS AND DIPLOMACY.

THE BRITISH ARE TRYING TO ASSUME THE PART OF JUDGE, A POSITION TO WHICH THE USSR STRONGLY OBJECTS.

IN SOVIET DIPLOMATIC CIRCLES IT IS BELIEVED THAT THESE DIFFERENCES SHOULD NOT BE VIEWED AS AN OBSTACLE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO NATIONS.

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BRAITHWAITE

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TO DESKBY 212300Z TOKYO  
TELNO MISC 264  
OF 211444Z SEPTEMBER 89  
AND TO IMMEDIATE FCO

FOR PM'S PARTY

PM'S VISIT: GORBACHEV'S OBJECTIVES.

1. GORBACHEV HAS JUST LAUNCHED ON AN INTENSE BURST OF DOMESTIC POLITICAL ACTIVITY AS PERESTROIKA NEARS ITS CRISIS (MY MIFT). IT IS A MEASURE OF THE IMPORTANCE HE ATTACHES TO HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PM THAT HE HAS NEVERTHELESS MADE TIME FOR A SUBSTANTIAL EXCHANGE WITH HER IN THE VERY BRIEF INTERVAL BETWEEN HIS PARTY PLENUM AND THE OPENING OF THE AUTUMN SUPREME SOVIET, BOTH OF MAJOR IMPORTANCE FOR THE POLITICAL FUTURE OF THE COUNTRY AND OF HIMSELF.
2. GORBACHEV'S FOREIGN POLICY IS THE ONE UNDOUBTED ACHIEVEMENT OF PERESTROIKA SO FAR. MOST PEOPLE HERE SEE A DIRECT CONNECTION BETWEEN TENSION ABROAD AND REPRESSION AT HOME. GORBACHEV HAS REASSURED THEM BY DEMONSTRATING THAT HE CAN DEVELOP A STRONG AND CONSTRUCTIVE RELATIONSHIP EVEN WITH SUCH A CLEAR-SIGHTED CRITIC OF THE COMMUNIST SYSTEM AS MRS THATCHER. HER HOLD ON PEOPLE'S IMAGINATION HERE HAS OF COURSE BEEN REINFORCED BY THEIR GROWING BELIEF THAT HER CRITICISM IS ENTIRELY JUSTIFIED.
3. WESTERN UNDERSTANDING AND SYMPATHY FOR PERESTROIKA IS THEREFORE POLITICALLY IMPORTANT FOR GORBACHEV. IN HIS SPEECH AT THE PRIME MINISTER'S DINNER IN APRIL HE SHOWED HOW SENSITIVE HE WAS TO THE SCEPTICAL PRONOUNCEMENTS OF KISSINGER AND OTHERS (THE "CERTAIN CIRCLES IN THE WEST" TO WHICH HE DARKLY REFERRED ON THAT OCCASION). OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPOSE HIS COLLEAGUES TO THE REALITIES OF THE OUTSIDE WORLD ARE EQUALLY IMPORTANT TO HIM: CHERNYAYEV, HIS DIPLOMATIC ADVISER, TOLD ME IN THE SUMMER THAT HE PARTICULARLY WELCOMED THE ATTENTION WE WERE PAYING TO GENERAL YAZOV, THE DEFENCE MINISTER, AT A TIME WHEN THE ARMY'S POSITION WAS OF INCREASING POLITICAL DELICACY.
4. IT IS AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND THAT ONE SHOULD SEE RUSSIAN SUSPICIONS THAT OUR EXPULSION OF SOVIET INTELLIGENCE OFFICERS IN MAY WAS MOTIVATED BY POLITICAL RATHER THAN SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS. THIS BIZARRE INTERPRETATION WAS NO DOUBT DELIBERATELY PROMOTED BY ILL-WISHERS, IN PART PERHAPS TO DEMONSTRATE THAT GORBACHEV'S INVESTMENT IN HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PM HAD FAILED TO PAY OFF. BUT EVEN SOME PEOPLE IN GORBACHEV'S ENTOURAGE SEEM NOT TO HAVE BEEN IMMUNE TO SUSPICION. GORBACHEV'S SENSIBLE REACTION WAS TO INSIST ON "BUSINESS AS USUAL" IN ANGLO-SOVIET RELATIONS.
5. BUT - AS CHERNYAYEV HINTED TO ME ON MONDAY - IT NEVERTHELESS SEEMS PROBABLE THAT ONE OF GORBACHEV'S MAIN OBJECTIVES AT SATURDAY'S MEETING WILL BE TO FORM A JUDGEMENT (PERHAPS WITHOUT RAISING THE MATTER EXPLICITLY) AS TO WHETHER THE EXPULSIONS DID REFLECT ANY CHANGE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S UNDERLYING ATTITUDE TO HIMSELF AND HIS POLICIES: AND IF POSSIBLE TO SECURE A PUBLIC DEMONSTRATION OF HER CONTINUED SUPPORT WHICH WILL SERVE HIM DOMESTICALLY.
6. THIS SUGGESTS THAT HE WILL WANT TO SPEND A GOOD DEAL OF THE TIME CONVINCING THE PRIME MINISTER THAT HE HAS THE POLICIES TO MASTER HIS PRESENT PROBLEMS. AS PRIMAKOV (NOW PROMOTED TO CANDIDATE MEMBERSHIP OF THE POLITBURO) TOLD THE PM AT THE AIRPORT, HE WILL ALSO WANT TO HAVE A WIDERANGING DISCUSSION OF INTERNATIONAL ISSUES RANGING FROM ARMS CONTROL TO REGIONAL ISSUES. BUT HIS MOST IMMEDIATE INTERNATIONAL PREOCCUPATION, NOT LEAST BECAUSE OF ITS OBVIOUS LINKS WITH HIS DOMESTIC DIFFICULTIES, MAY WELL BE THE GROWING DISARRAY IN HIS EAST EUROPEAN EMPIRE. HIS HITHERTO TOLERANT ATTITUDE TO CHANGE THERE MUST BE TESTED BY THE POSSIBILITY THAT NEITHER OF THE TWO GERMANY'S WILL REMAIN CONTENT MUCH LONGER WITH THE POST-WAR SETTLEMENT ON WHICH RUSSIA'S POSITION IN CENTRAL EUROPE DEPENDS. THIS IS NOT A MATTER ON WHICH GORBACHEV HAS SHOWN ANY DISPOSITION TO SPECULATE IN PUBLIC: NO DOUBT BECAUSE THERE IS NOTHING IN PRESENT SOVIET POLICY TOWARDS THE GERMAN PROBLEM WHICH COULD COPE WITH THE UNCERTAINTIES INVOLVED. HE MIGHT BE MORE FORTHCOMING IN THE INTIMACY OF HIS EXCHANGES WITH THE PRIME MINISTER.

BRAITHWAITE

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