

131018Z

COMMENT:

CONFIDENTIAL

FM MOSCOW

TO DESKBY 111330Z FCO

TELNO 1883

OF 111322Z NOVEMBER 89

INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON, PARIS, BONN, EAST BERLIN, BMG BERLIN

INFO IMMEDIATE UKDEL NATO

FOR RESIDENT CLERK

SOVIET ATTITUDE TO CHANGE IN EAST GERMANY AND EASTERN EUROPE.

SUMMARY

1. GORBACHEV'S POLICY IN EASTERN EUROPE IS BEING OVERRUN BY EVENTS. THIS HAS IMPLICATIONS FOR HIS DOMESTIC POSITION AS WELL AS HIS FOREIGN POLICY. IT IS IN THE WESTERN INTEREST TO HELP HIM THROUGH THIS CRITICAL PERIOD: HE KEPT HIS SILENCE IN PUBLIC, BUT PRESUMABLY SEES JOINT CRISIS MANAGEMENT AS PREFERABLE TO OTHER OPTIONS. I DOUBT IF THE WEST CAN WAIT UNTIL HIS SUMMIT WITH BUSH.

2. THIS TELEGRAM COMMENTS ON THE SOVIET VIEW OF EVENTS. MY 2 IPTS CONTAIN RECOMMENDATIONS: ESSENTIALLY THAT THE PRIME MINISTER SHOULD WRITE TO GORBACHEV BEFORE SHE SEES PRESIDENT BUSH.

DETAIL

3. DESPITE THE SPECTACULAR EVENTS OF RECENT WEEKS, SOVIET POLICY IN GERMANY IS WHAT IT WAS BEFORE HONECKER FELL (MY TELEGRAM 1702 OF 6 OCTOBER): OUT-OF-DATE, INCOHERENT, AND SHOT THROUGH WITH POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS INTERNAL CONTRADICTIONS. BUT GORBACHEV'S UNDERLYING DILEMMA OF FOUR WEEKS AGO HAS NOW BECOME A PRESSING CRISIS. IT CRUELLY HIGHLIGHTS THE CONTRAST BETWEEN HIS REQUIREMENT TO MAINTAIN THE STABLE POST-WAR ORDER IN CENTRAL EUROPE (NOT LEAST AS A FRAMEWORK FOR THE SOVIET ARMIES THERE UNTIL THESE CAN BE REDUCED OR WITHDRAWN FOLLOWING AN ORDERLY EAST-WEST NEGOTIATION), AND THE FORCES OF CHANGE WHICH HE HAS UNLEASHED WITHIN THE SOVIET UNION AND ITS EMPIRE. THIS IS BECOMING A MAJOR TEST TO GORBACHEV'S CAPACITY TO MAKE POLICY IN A CRISIS, OF HIS ABILITY TO HOLD HIS GOVERNMENT TOGETHER, AND PERHAPS OF HIS PERSONAL AUTHORITY. WE HAVE NO DIRECT EVIDENCE OF DIVISIONS WITHIN THE LEADERSHIP ON THIS ISSUE - BUT IN THE EYES OF MANY RUSSIANS IT MUST SHARPEN AN IMAGE OF GORBACHEV AS A LEADER PRESIDING OVER SIMULTANEOUS INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL DISINTEGRATION. THE STILTED AND OLD-FASHIONED LANGUAGE OF HIS MESSAGE TO THE PRIME MINISTER, A DESPERATE APPEAL RATHER THAN A CONSTRUCTIVE PROPOSAL, SHOWS HOW FAR HE HAS TO GO TOWARDS CONSTRUCTING A COHERENT NEW POLICY.

4. IN PUBLIC THE LEADERSHIP HAVE OFFERED VIRTUALLY NO GUIDANCE THIS WEEK. THE ONLY PUBLIC COMMENT HAS BEEN THROUGH ROUTINE PRESS BRIEFING BY MFA PRESS SPOKESMAN GERASIMOV, TRYING AS BEST HE CAN TO ADHERE TO THE EXISTING LINE (REPORTED BY SEPARATE TELEGRAM). NOT MUCH EVEN OF GERASIMOV'S LINE HAS FILTERED THROUGH TO THE SOVIET PRESS.

5. MEANWHILE THE GAP BETWEEN EVENTS ON THE GROUND AND SOVIET STRATEGY IS WIDENING. THE STRATEGY RUNS ROUGHLY AS FOLLOWS:
(A) OVER THE PAST YEARS THE SOVIET UNION HAS PROCLAIMED THE

"DE-IDEOLOGISATION" OF INTERNAL RELATIONS AND AN END - IF THE WEST WILL COMPLY - TO THE COLD WAR.

- (B) WHAT HAS FAILED IN EASTERN EUROPE, ACCORDING TO SOVIET STRATEGISTS, IS NOT SOCIALISM BUT STALINISM. STALINISM HAS GIVEN SOCIALISM A BAD NAME, HELPED TO PROVOKE THE COLD WAR, HAD BECOME UNTENABLE INTERNATIONALLY, AND WAS IMPOSING BURDENS WHICH THE USSR COULD NO LONGER SUPPORT.
- (C) IT HAS THEREFORE BEEN IN SOVIET INTERESTS ACTIVELY TO PROMOTE DESTALINISATION IN EASTERN EUROPE AND AN END TO MONOLITHIC REGIMES BASED ON A SINGLE CONCEPT OF SOCIALISM (ZHIVKOV IS THE LATEST VICTIM). BUT THEY SHOULD BE REPLACED BY FORMS OF GOVERNMENT WHICH WERE STILL "SOCIALIST", THOUGH POPULARLY SUPPORTED AND ADAPTED TO LOCAL CIRCUMSTANCES. (GERASIMOV'S "SINATRA DOCTRINE": THEY CAN GO THEIR OWN WAY).
- (D) WHILE THESE CHANGES ARE TAKING PLACE, STABILITY AND THE ESSENTIAL FRAMEWORK OF THE POST-WAR ORDER MUST BE PRESERVED. THIS MEANS THAT IN THE MEDIUM TERM (SAY THE NEXT TEN YEARS):
- THERE SHOULD BE NO QUESTION OF CHANGING POST-WAR BOUNDARIES. NOW IS NOT/NOT, IN THE SOVIET VIEW, THE TIME TO ADDRESS "THE GERMAN QUESTION":
 - WARSAW PACT MEMBERSHIP SHOULD NOT BE CHANGED, THOUGH THE WARSAW TREATY ORGANISATION SHOULD PROGRESSIVELY ADAPT ITS STRUCTURES AND EVOLVE FROM A "MILITARY/ POLITICAL" INTO A "POLITICAL/MILITARY" ALLIANCE.
 - THE BALANCE BETWEEN THE WARSAW PACT AND NATO SHOULD BE SUSTAINED, WHILE FORCE LEVELS ARE REDUCED THROUGH NEGOTIATION.
- (E) THE FUNDAMENTAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EAST AND WEST IN EUROPE SHOULD CHANGE ONLY AFTER AND THROUGH NEGOTIATIONS TO REMOVE MILITARY CONFRONTATION. IT SHOULD NOT BE PRECIPITATED BY INTERNAL CHANGES IN EASTERN COUNTRIES. MILITARY BARRIERS SHOULD BE DISMANTLED BEFORE POLITICAL BARRIERS, NOT VICE VERSA. OTHERWISE MILITARY FORCES (NOTABLY THE SOVIET FORCES IN EAST GERMANY), WILL BE LEFT STRANDED, AND INSTABILITY WILL ENSUE.
- (F) IN THE LONG TERM, THIS WILL LEAD TO "THE PARALLEL AND SYMMETRICAL MERGER OF BLOCS IN THE COMMON EUROPEAN HOME, WITH UNNECESSARY WALLS DISAPPEARING" (TO QUOTE ONE SOVIET COMMENTATOR). AT THAT DISTANT POINT THE GERMAN QUESTION MAY ANSWER ITSELF.

6. THE PACE OF EVENTS IN THE GDR THREATENS STEPS (D) AND (E) IN THIS STRATEGY. THE SOVIETS MUST FEAR THAT KRENZ WILL NOT HAVE TIME TO ESTABLISH A DISTINCTIVE FORM OF EAST GERMAN SOCIALISM, AND THAT EAST GERMANY WILL NOT WAIT FOR THE ORDERLY PROCESSES OF MULTILATERAL EAST/WEST NEGOTIATION. AND THE POPULAR MOVEMENT, WHICH HAS SO FAR CLAIMED GORBACHEV AS AN ALLY, MAY WELL TURN AGAINST THE RUSSIANS WHO STAND AS A VISIBLE BARRIER TO REUNIFICATION. WHAT THEN HAPPENS TO THE SOVIET TROOPS THERE?

7. GORBACHEV'S PROBLEM IS NOW TO CONTROL THE FORCES HE HAS UNLEASHED. I DO NOT THINK THE RUSSIANS KNOW HOW TO DO THIS. HENCE THEIR PUBLIC SILENCE. HENCE THEIR INCREASINGLY UNREALISTIC ATTEMPTS TO AVOID ADDRESSING THE QUESTION OF GERMANY'S FUTURE, AND TO TRY TO PERSUADE OTHERS THAT THIS QUESTION SHOULD NOT BE ADDRESSSED FOR THE TIME BEING (THE CRITICISM OF WESTERN STATEMENTS BY ZAMYATIN IN YTURS; YAKOVLEV'S REMARKS TO BRZEZINSKI IN MY TELNO 1865). HENCE ALSO THE TONE OF GORBACHEV'S MESSAGE TO THE PRIME MINISTER. IT IS VERY DIFFICULT TO DISCUSS THIS PROBLEM WITH SOVIET OFFICIALS, FOR OBVIOUS REASONS: BUT WHEN WE GET NEAR TO IT, THEIR AUTOMATIC RESPONSE IS THAT IT IS AS MUCH OUR PROBLEM AS THEIRS.

8. GIVEN THE SOVIET MILITARY AND POLITICAL STAKE IN EAST GERMANY, IT WOULD BE ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE FOR ANY SOVIET LEADERSHIP SIMPLY TO LET EVENTS TAKE THEIR COURSE THERE. WE MUST ASSUME THEY ARE LOOKING AT A NUMBER OF POLICY OPTIONS, INCLUDING (AS ZAMYATIN'S DEMARCHE SHOWS) CRISIS MANAGEMENT WITH THE WEST. IN MIFT I LOOK AT WAYS WE MIGHT RESPOND TO THEIR IMMEDIATE CONCERNS.

BRAITHWAITE

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ADVANCE	13	
.BERLIN/INNER-GERMAN RELATIONS		1
. (WIDE)		1
PS		1
PS/PUS		1
PS/SIR J FRETWELL		1
MR RATFORD		1
HD/WED		1
HD/SOVIET		1
HD/NEWS		1
RESIDENT CLERK		1
MR S MCCARTHY SEC(NATO/UKP)MOD		1
WG CDR ANDREWS DCTS NATO MOD		1
MRS GLOVER LEGAL ADV		1
MAIN	123	
.BERLIN/INNER-GERMAN RELATIONS		1
. (WIDE)		1
LIMITED		6
WED		9
SOVIET		5
EED		6
ECD(E)		6
SEC POL D		6
MAED		6
PUSD		26
CSCE UNIT		4
NEWS		9
INFO		11
NAD		4
PLANNERS		3
RESEARCH		1
RMD		1
CRD		2
PS		7
PS/MR MAUDE		1
PS/MR WALDEGRAVE		1
PS/PUS		1
PS/SIR J FRETWELL		1
MR P J WESTON		1
MR BAYNE		1
MR RATFORD		1
MR GOULDEN		1
MISS SPENCER		1
ADDITIONAL	8	
BERLIN/INNER-GERMAN (WIDE)		8