

Secret / DEDIP

8a-b.

SECRET

DEDIP

BURNING BUSH

FM MOSCOW

TO DESKBY 111430Z FCO

TELNO 1386

OF 111427Z NOVEMBER 89

INFO IMMEDIATE BONN, WASHINGTON, PARIS, UKDEL NATO

Exactly your
reaction

CD. MS

FCO TELNOS 641 AND 643 TO BONN: QUADRIPARTITE MEETING OF POLITICAL DIRECTORS.

1. I HAVE COMMENTED IN SEPARATE TELEGRAM ON THE SOVIET ATTITUDE TO EVENTS IN THE GDR.

2. I WAS ALARMED TO SEE IN TURS TO BONN THAT THE AMERICANS ARE BENT ON PRESSING FOR BALTIC SELF-DETERMINATION WHEN THE PRESIDENT MEETS GORBACHEV. WHATEVER THE DOMESTIC PRESSURES MAY BE ON PRESIDENT BUSH, I RECOMMEND THAT WE SHOULD URGE HIM TO TREAD VERY SOFTLY IN THIS AREA. EVEN BEFORE EAST GERMANY RAN OUT OF CONTROL, IT WAS A POINT OF ACUTE SENSITIVITY FOR THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP. (THE RUSSIANS WERE HIGHLY APPRECIATIVE OF THE DELICACY WITH WHICH THE PRIME MINISTER HANDLED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE BALTIC STATES IN HER MOSCOW PRESS CONFERENCE ON 23 SEPTEMBER).

3. PART OF THE SOVIET NIGHTMARE IS THAT THEIR LOSS OF CONTROL OVER EASTERN EUROPE WILL FUEL BALTIC DEMANDS FOR INDEPENDENCE AT A TIME WHEN THEY WERE HOPING TO ESTABLISH A REALISTIC ACCOMMODATION WITH THE MAINSTREAM OF BALTIC OPINION. IF ANY WESTERN GOVERNMENT, LET ALONE THE UNITED STATES, WERE NOW TO PUSH FOR AN EVEN GREATER MEASURE OF SELF-DETERMINATION IN THE BALTIC STATES THAN IS ALREADY HAPPENING, THIS WOULD BE SEEN BY MOSCOW AS THE CLEAREST EVIDENCE OF AN ATTEMPT TO INTERFERE DIRECTLY IN INTERNAL SOVIET AFFAIRS AND TO ACCELERATE THE DISINTEGRATION OF THE SOVIET UNION. EITHER GORBACHEV HIMSELF OR THOSE PRESENTLY BELOW HIM WOULD REACT VIGOROUSLY AGAINST SUCH A PUSH. AT A TIME WHEN THE TREND IS IN ANY CASE MOVING IN THE WEST'S DIRECTION, SUCH PRESSURE BY THE AMERICAN PRESIDENT WOULD BE ILL-CONCEIVED, COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE, AND COULD UNDERMINE MUCH THAT HAS RECENTLY BEEN ACHIEVED IN EAST/WEST RELATIONS.

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(1)

4. /

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4. PERHAPS THE PRIME MINISTER COULD MAKE THIS POINT TO THE PRESIDENT
NEXT WEEK.

BRAITHWAITE

LIMITED.

MD/ PLANNERS

MD/ SOVIET D

MD/ NAD

PS

PS/ Mr. Waldegrave.

PS/ AUS

PS/ Sir J. Fretwell.

Mr Weston

Mr Ratford.

PS/ No 10 Downing St.

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(2)