

GR 910

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

DESKBY FCO 071200Z

FM EAST BERLIN 071055Z OCT 79

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 137 OF 7 OCTOBER

INFO IMMEDIATE MOD.

INFO PRIORITY BONN, BMG BERLIN, MOSCOW, WASHINGTON, UKDEL NATO,
UKMIS NEW YORK, SOFIA, PRAGUE, WARSAW, BUDAPEST, BUCHAREST,
VIENNA (FOR UKDEL MBFR)

MY TELNO 134 (NOT TO ALL)

THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS: 6 OCTOBER

1. HIGHLIGHT OF THE DAY WAS AN EVENING GALA GATHERING (FESTVERANSTALTUNG) AT THE PALACE OF THE REPUBLIC ON UNTER DEN LINDEN, AT WHICH THE CHIEF SPEAKERS (IN THAT ORDER) WERE HONECKER AND BREZHNEV. IN SUBSTANCE THE MAIN INTEREST WAS THE LATTER-S ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THE SOVIET UNION INTENDED IN THE COURSE OF THE COMING YEAR TO WITHDRAW 20,000 MEN AND 1,000 TANKS FROM THE GDR.

2. THIS WOULD BE A UNILATERAL CONTRIBUTION TO PEACE AND DETENTE. IT WAS NOW UP TO THE WEST TO SHOW A MATCHING SPIRIT. BREZHNEV ALSO PROPOSED IN THE CONTEXT OF CBM'S THAT BOTH SIDES SHOULD GIVE EARLIER WARNING OF MILITARY MANOEUVRES, THAT THE CEILING FOR NOTIFICATION BE REDUCED FROM 25,000 TO 20,000 PARTICIPANTS, THAT NO MANOEUVRES INVOLVING OVER 40-50,000 TROOPS SHOULD BE HELD AT ALL, AND THAT MOVEMENTS (AS DISTINCT FROM MANOEUVRES) OF GROUND FORCES OF OVER 20,000 MEN SHOULD BE NOTIFIED. HE ALSO REPEATED THE SOVIET PROPOSAL FOR AN ALL-EUROPEAN CONFERENCE AT POLITICAL LEVEL, BUT MADE NO REFERENCE TO THE APPLICATION OF DETENTE OUTSIDE EUROPE. NOR DID HE MENTION CUBA. HE ALSO REFERRED TO THE IMPORTANT NEGOTIATIONS FOR SALT III THAT LAY AHEAD. ONCE SALT II HAD COME INTO FORCE, THE SOVIET UNION WOULD BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS POSSIBILITIES OF LIMITING NOT ONLY INTERCONTINENTAL WEAPONS, BUT OTHER WEAPONS AS WELL.

RESTRICTED

/3. THESE

3. THESE PROPOSALS FOLLOWED PASSAGES IN WHICH HE ATTACKED WESTERN IMPERIALISM AND NATO REARMAMENT IN FAMILIAR TERMS AND MAINTAINED THAT ALLEGATIONS ABOUT INCREASES OF SOVIET MILITARY STRENGTH WERE WITHOUT FOUNDATION AND A MERE PRETEXT FOR WESTERN MILITARISM. NEITHER SOVIET TROOP STRENGTHS IN CENTRAL EUROPE NOR SOVIET MEDIUM-RANGE ROCKETS AND BOMBERS IN WESTERN RUSSIA HAD BEEN INCREASED NUMERICALLY (HE WAS SILENT ABOUT QUALITY) IN THE PAST TEN YEARS. THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT WAS EVEN PREPARED TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF ITS MEDIUM-RANGE MISSILES AND BOMBERS PROVIDED THAT NO NEW MISSILE CAPABLE OF STRIKING AT THE SOVIET UNION WAS DEPLOYED IN WESTERN EUROPE. HE ISSUED A PARTICULAR WARNING TO THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC AGAINST ACCEPTING MEDIUM-RANGE MISSILES ON ITS TERRITORY, TOGETHER WITH AN ASSURANCE THAT THE SOVIET UNION WOULD NEVER USE NUCLEAR WEAPONS AGAINST COUNTRIES WHICH HAD RENOUNCED THEIR USE, PRODUCTION AND DEPLOYMENT ON THEIR TERRITORY. IF HOWEVER NEW MISSILES WERE INTRODUCED INTO WESTERN EUROPE, THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES WOULD HAVE TO TAKE APPROPRIATE MEASURES TO SAFEGUARD THEIR SECURITY, THE SITUATION IN EUROPE WOULD BE EXACERBATED AND THE INTERNATIONAL ATMOSPHERE POISONED.

4. HONECKER'S SPEECH, DELIVERED (IN CONTRAST TO BREZHNEV'S) IN A MONOTONOUSLY STRIDENT TONE, EULOGISED THE GDR'S POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE PAST THIRTY YEARS, ATTACKED THE UNREGENERATE SHORTCOMINGS OF CAPITALISM (IN PARTICULAR ITS TOLERATION OF HIGH RATES OF UNEMPLOYMENT) AND DENOUNCED IMPERIALISM AND THE AGGRESSIVE MOOD OF NATO, AND ESPECIALLY OF THE FRG. INSTEAD OF ALLOWING THE STATIONING ON ITS TERRITORY OF MEDIUM-RANGE MISSILES, THE LATTER SHOULD JOIN IN CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE TWO GERMANIES TO PROMOTE DISARMAMENT IN THE FRAMEWORK OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE.

5. THE PROCEEDINGS WERE OPENED BY NAUMANN, POLITBURO BOSS OF EAST BERLIN, WHO WELCOMED THE VARIOUS FRATERNAL DELEGATIONS PRESENT (SEE MY TELNO 134) TO THE ACCOMPANIMENT OF ENTHUSIASTIC AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (PARTICULARLY FROM THE KAMPUCHEAN REPRESENTATIVE), MOST OF THEM BEING SALUTED AS QUOTE COMRADES UNQUOTE. NKOMO, CONTRARY TO PRIOR BILLING, WAS NOT PRESENT, MSIKA BEING GREETED IN HIS STEAD. ARAFAT, CALLED A QUOTE FRIEND UNQUOTE RATHER THAN QUOTE COMRADE UNQUOTE, OCCUPIED A SEAT IN THE FRONT ROW NEXT TO AXEN (POLITBURO MEMBER RESPONSIBLE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS) WHO HAD SEKOU TOURE ON HIS OTHER SIDE. APART FROM THEM, THE ONLY NON-EAST EUROPEAN DIGNITARY ON THE FRONT ROW OF THE DAIS WAS GIAP, APPROPRIATELY NEXT TO HOFFMANN, MINISTER OF DEFENCE. AT THE END OF THE PROCEEDINGS BREZHNEV MADE A POINT OF GREETING ARAFAT EFFUSIVELY.

RESTRICTED

6. BREZHNEV'S PHYSICAL PERFORMANCE WAS BETTER THAN I HAD EXPECTED. IN THE MORNING HE TOOK PART INTER ALIA IN THE WREATH-LAYING CEREMONY AT TREPTOW, WALKING SEVERAL HUNDRED YARDS, ALBEIT WITH A STIFF, SHUFFLING GAIT, TO THE FOOT OF THE SOVIET WAR MEMORIAL WITH HONECKER AND AN AIDE ON EITHER SIDE TO STEADY HIM. AT THE EVENING FESTVERANSTALTUNG HE LEFT HIS CHAIR IN THE CENTRE OF THE FRONT ROW OF THE DAIS AND PROCEEDED ALONE AND UNAIDED TO THE END OF THE ROW, DOWN FIVE STEPS, AND UP TO THE LECTERN OUT IN FRONT, WHERE HE STOOD TO DELIVER HIS 20-MINUTE SPEECH, BEFORE RETURNING, AGAIN ALONE AND UNAIDED, TO THE DAIS. HIS VOICE THROUGHOUT WAS FIRM, ALTHOUGH QUIETER AND MORE MEASURED THAN HONECKERS.

7. THE WHOLE AFFAIR WAS DOMINATED BY THE THEME OF BLOC, IN PARTICULAR SOVIET-GDR SOLIDARITY. HONECKER'S SPEECH WAS REplete WITH APPROPRIATE SYCOPHANCY, WITH SPECIAL MENTION OF THE AGREEMENT SIGNED ON 5 OCTOBER FOR SPECIALISATION AND CO-OPERATION IN PRODUCTION BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. BREZHNEV WAS EVERYWHERE THE CENTRAL FIGURE. AS WE ENTERED THE PALACE OF THE REPUBLIC A CLAQUE OF FDJ (FREE GERMAN YOUTH) LINING THE HALL AND STAIRS DEAFENED US WITH THEIR CHANT OF QUOTE FRIENDSHIP AND SOLIDARITY UNQUOTE. NAUMANN'S WELCOME TO THE FRATERNAL DELEGATIONS, AS WELL AS HONECKER'S SPEECH, BROUGHT OUT THE THEME OF THE IRRISISTABLE PROGRESS OF THE CAMP OF SOCIALISM AND PEACE AND THE FORCES OF REVOLUTION AND LIBERATION, WITH THE GDR NOW PLAYING A WORLD-WIDE ROLE IN THE HISTORIC PROCESS.

FOSTER

FCO/WHITEHALL DISTRIBUTION
EESD