

ADVANCE COPIES

16

US/SOVIET ARMS CONTROL TALKS

PS (2)
PS/LADY YOUNG
PS/MR HENTON
PS/PUS
MR ~~DEREK~~ THOMAS
MR GOODALL
MR RATFORD
MR ~~WALTER~~ DAUNT
MR DAVID THOMAS

HD/DEFENCE D
HD/ACDD
HD/SOVIET D

~~RESIDENT CLERK~~

MR POWELL, NO 10 DOWNING ST

MR D NICHOLLS, DUS(P) } MOD
S. NPS() }
DACU }
CSI }



15.1.85

GWS 375

IMMEDIATE

ADVANCE COPY

CONFIDENTIAL
FM MOSCOW
TO DESKRY 161600Z FCO
TELNO 066
OF 161450Z JANUARY 86

INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON, PARIS, BONN, UKDEL NATO
INFO PRIORITY UKDIS GENEVA, UKDEL VIENNA, UKDEL STOCKHOLM

MY TELNO 057: GORBACHEV'S STATEMENT ON ARMS CONTROL

COMMENT

1. AS THE US/SOVIET GENEVA TALKS RESUME GORBACHEV HAS SEIZED THE INITIATIVE ON THE SUBSTANCE OF ARMS CONTROL AND THE PROPAGANDA HIGH GROUND. THE "SPIRIT OF GENEVA" IS SKILFULLY EXPLOITED. THE APPEARANCE OF "OPENNESS" ON VERIFICATION IN ALL ARMS CONTROL AREAS - NUCLEAR REDUCTIONS, NUCLEAR TESTS, CW AND MBFR, IN CONTRAST TO THE TRADITIONAL "VERIFICATION EQUALS ESPIONAGE" SOVIET LINE, IS A PARTICULARLY STRONG PROPAGANDA CARD. BUT GORBACHEV IS PROBABLY CONFIDENT THAT THIS CHEQUE WILL NOT BE CASHED, AT LEAST IN REAGAN'S TIME (SEE PARA 3 BELOW).

NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND SPACE

2. APART FROM THE "VISION" OF A NUCLEAR WEAPONS-FREE WORLD BY THE END OF THIS CENTURY, THE MOST STRIKING FEATURE OF GORBACHEV'S PROGRAMME IS THE APPARENT ACCEPTANCE, WITHIN STAGE ONE, OF THE ORIGINAL US "ZERO OPTION" ONINF. ALTHOUGH THE FORMULA "WEAPONS CAPABLE OF REACHING EACH OTHER'S TERRITORY" IS RETAINED, THIS SEEMS FIRMLY PLACED IN THE CONTEXT OF THE WESTERN DEFINITION OF STRATEGIC WEAPONS, WITH THE REFERENCE TO BRITISH AND FRENCH

THIS SEEMS FIRMLY PLACED IN THE CONTEXT OF THE WESTERN DEFINITION OF STRATEGIC WEAPONS, WITH THE REFERENCE TO BRITISH AND FRENCH SYSTEMS FOLLOWING AND HELD OUTSIDE THE SEPARATE SUGGESTION OF A PURELY US/SOVIET TRADE-OFF ON INF. THERE IS NO REFERENCE TO AN "INTERIM" INF AGREEMENT, OR TO SS20'S OUTSIDE THE EUROPEAN ZONE.

3. EVEN IF THIS DOES REPRESENT A MAJOR CONCESSION IN PRINCIPLE, GORBACHEV HAS SKILFULLY TIED THE OVERALL PACKAGE WITH A WEB OF PRE-CONDITIONS.

A. RENUNCIATION OF SPACE WEAPONS

THIS STILL APPEARS TO APPLY PRINCIPALLY TO A DEAL ON 50% STRATEGIC CUTS. BUT THE LINKAGE REMAINS ABSOLUTELY FIRM, ALTHOUGH THE RENUNCIATION OF THE "CREATION, TESTING AND DEPLOYMENT OF SPACE STRIKE WEAPONS" (ENGLISH TASS USES "DEVELOPMENT" FOR "CREATION") NOW BECOMES EXPLICITLY MUTUAL, APPLYING TO THE SOVIET UNION AS WELL AS TO THE US. THERE APPEARS TO BE A REGRESSION FROM GORBACHEV'S ORIGINAL DISTINCTION BETWEEN FUNDAMENTAL RESEARCH (UNVERIFIABLE AND THEREFORE UNCONSTRAINABLE) AND VERIFIABLE ACTIVITY OUTSIDE THE LABORATORY IN FORMALISING HIS PROPOSAL FIRST MADE AT GENEVA, THAT THE VERIFICATION OF A SDI BAN SHOULD INCLUDE "THE OPENING FOR INSPECTION OF THE RELEVANT LABORATORIES".

B. US/SOVIET TESTING MORATORIUM

THE CATCH WORDS ARE "FROM THE VERY BEGINNING": A MUTUAL SELF-DENYING ORDINANCE ON NUCLEAR TESTS HAS NOW JOINED RENUNCIATION OF THE SDI AS A PRECONDITION FOR NUCLEAR REDUCTIONS.

C. NO TRANSFER OF US MISSILES TO OTHERS AND NO "BUILD-UP" OF BRITISH AND FRENCH SYSTEMS

THIS WOULD SEEM AT LEAST TO CATCH THE TRIDENT PROGRAMME WHICH THE RUSSIANS HAVE BOTH REFUSED TO REGARD AS MODERNISATION, RATHER THAN INCREASE, AND HAVE ALSO CONSTRUED AS A POTENTIAL VIOLATION OF SALT 2 ON THE GROUNDS THAT THE TRIDENT DEAL REPRESENTS A US ATTEMPT TO CIRCUMVENT THE TREATY.

4. THE CRUX OF THE PROGRAMME IS STAGE 1. STAGES 2 AND 3 ARE VAGUER AND DO NOT ATTEMPT TO PRESCRIBE MEASURES FOR BRITISH/FRENCH/CHINESE DISMANTLEMENT. THE PROPOSED BAN ON WEAPONS BASED ON NEW PHYSICAL PRINCIPLES IS AN ADMISSION THAT THE ARM TREATY NEEDS TO BE SUPPLEMENTED EVEN AFTER SDI HAS BEEN STIFLED.

5. RECOGNITION OF THE PROBLEM OF VERIFYING THE DESTRUCTION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS SEEMS NEW AND, IN KEEPING WITH GORBACHEV'S OFFERS ON VERIFICATION MEASURES ELSEWHERE, AN ATTEMPT TO ANTICIPATE THE MORE OBVIOUS WESTERN OBJECTIONS.

MORATORIUM

6. I AM INCLINED TO BELIEVE GORBACHEV'S ASSERTION THAT THE EXTENSION DECISION WAS NOT EASY. NO DOUBT THERE HAS BEEN PRESSURE FROM THE MILITARY, BUT LITTLE OUTWARD SIGN THAT GORBACHEV HAD SERIOUS PROBLEMS WITH IT.

PROBLEMS WITH IT.

7. THE FORMULA ON VERIFICATION "IN NECESSARY SITUATIONS" IS NEATLY AMBIGUOUS. IT DOES NOT AMOUNT TO ACCEPTING THE CONCEPT OF CHALLENGE INSPECTION IN TOTO.

CW

8. THE PROPOSAL APPEARS TO CONTAIN LITTLE NOVELTY EXCEPT THE PROPOSED BAN ON THE INDUSTRIAL BASE FOR PRODUCING CW. BUT VERIFICATION IS AGAIN GIVEN PROMINENCE.

MBFR

9. THIS IS THE LEAST NEGATIVE ASSESSMENT SO FAR OF THE WEST'S LATEST PROPOSAL AND DOES NOT REPEAT THE FIRST SOVIET REACTION THAT IT WAS FILLED WITH "DURIOUS CONTENT". THE PASSAGE STRIKES A BUSINESSLIKE NOTE AND IMPLIES A WILL TO REACH AGREEMENT.

CDE

10. THE SEPARATION OF THE NAVAL PROBLEM TO A LATER STAGE IS NEW. WHILST APPARENTLY ATTRACTIVE IN THE SHORT TERM, IT STORES UP A POTENTIAL DIFFICULTY FOR LATER, EITHER IN STOCKHOLM OR IN VIENNA.

ASIA/REGIONAL ISSUES

11. THESE SECTIONS ARE VERY GENERAL AND APPEAR DESIGNED TO GIVE THE PROPOSAL UNIVERSAL RELEVANCE AND APPEAL OUTSIDE THE PURELY EUROPEAN AND NORTH AMERICAN CONTEXT.

CARTLEDGE

CCN: PARA 2 LINE 4 SHOULD READ "ZERO OPTION" ON INF.

YYYY

MXHPAN 0245

NNNN