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FM FCO
TO PRIORITY WASHINGTON
TELNO 396
OF 061230Z MARCH 86
AND TO PRIORITY PARIS, BONN, UKDEL NATO
INFO PRIORITY MOSCOW

MY TWO IPTS: PRIME MINSITER'S REPLY TO GORBACHEV

1. THE FOLLOWING IS THE LINE TO TAKE WITH THE NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL.
2. THE PRIME MINISTER'S REPLY EMPHASISED THAT MR GORBACHEV'S PROPOSALS HAD BEEN CONSIDERED WITH GREAT CARE AND DISCUSSED WITH OUR ALLIES. IT EMPHASISED THAT THE GOAL OF A NUCLEAR FREE WORLD WAS NECESSARILY LONG TERM AND THAT FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN THEIR DETERRENT ROLE WOULD CONTINUE TO MAKE AN ESSENTIAL CONTRIBUTION TO PEACE AND STABILITY.
3. THE REPLY WENT ON TO SUGGEST THAT WE SHOULD CONCENTRATE NOW ON ACHIEVING REALISTIC, BALANCED AND VERIFIABLE ARMS CONTROL MEASURES ACROSS THE BOARD ON THE BASIS OF DETAILED PROPOSALS WHICH WERE ON THE TABLE:
 - ON STRATEGIC WEAPONS, THE US PROPOSALS OF 1 NOVEMBER FOR 50 PERCENT REDUCTIONS,
 - IN THE SPACE BASKET, WHERE THE CAMP DAVID FOUR POINTS PROVIDED A GOOD BASIS ON WHICH TO PROCEED,
 - ON INF, THE MOST RECENT US PROPOSALS.

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4. THE PRIME MINISTER'S REPLY REITERATED THE UNACCEPTABILITY OF SOVIET CONDITIONS AS REGARDS THE MINIMUM BRITISH STRATEGIC FORCE AND RESTATED OUR LONG STANDING CONDITIONS FOR RE - CONSIDERING OUR CONTRIBUTION TO ARMS CONTROL. 5. THE REPLY CONCLUDED BY STRESSING THE NEED TO CORRECT THE IMBALANCE IN CONVENTIONAL FORCES AND TO WIDEN EAST/WEST DISCUSSIONS TO INCLUDE REGIONAL, BILATERAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES. IT CALLED FOR EARLY PROGRESS IN THE MBFR, CW AND CDE NEGOTIATIONS, IN ALL OF WHICH AGREEMENT ON ADEQUATE VERIFICATION PROVISIONS WOULD BE ESSENTIAL. ON CTB THE PRIME MINISTER, CONFIRMED THE NEED FOR FURTHER WORK BEFORE IT WOULD BE WORTHWHILE RESUMING THE TRILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS.

6. ALL THESE POINTS WILL BE FOLLOWED UP WHEN THE SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTER VISITS THE UK.

HOWE

US/SOVIET ARMS CONTROL TALKS
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NEWS D PS/PUS
NAD MR DEREK THOMAS
EED MR GOODALL
WED MR RATFORD
PLANNING STAFF MR DAUNT
RES D MR DAVID THOMAS
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