

GRS 520

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INFO PRIORITY MOSCOW, BONN, PARIS, UKDEL NATO, UKDIS GENEVA, ROME
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MIPT: NUCLEAR TESTING

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF WHITE HOUSE DEPUTY PRESS SECRETARY'S
STATEMENT OF 29 MARCH:

BEGINS

THE PRESIDENT HAS TAKEN NOTE OF GENERAL SECRETARY GORBACHEV'S
SPEECH ON SOVIET TELEVISION TODAY.

THE UNITED STATES HAS REPEATEDLY MADE IT CLEAR THAT THE PRACTICAL
STEP NOW NEEDED IN THE AREA OF NUCLEAR TESTING LIMITATIONS IS TO
ENHANCE MUTUAL CONFIDENCE IN THE ABILITY OF THE TWO SIDES TO
VERIFY EXISTING AGREEMENTS, IN PARTICULAR THE UNRATIFIED
THRESHOLD TEST BAN TREATY AND THE PEACEFUL NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS
TREATY. THE PRESIDENT HAS MADE A SERIES OF CONCRETE PROPOSALS TO
THE SOVIET UNION IN THIS REGARD, MOST RECENTLY ON MARCH 14. IN
THIS INITIATIVE, THE PRESIDENT INVITED MR GORBACHEV TO SEND SOVIET
EXPERTS TO THE US TO EXAMINE OUR NEW CORTEX VERIFICATION SYSTEM
AND TO OBSERVE A US NUCLEAR TEST IN MID-APRIL AT OUR NEVADA TEST
SITE. THE PRESIDENT MADE IT CLEAR THAT IF THIS MEETING LEADS TO
AN AGREEMENT ON VERIFICATION, INCORPORATING CORTEX, WHICH MEETS
OUR CONCERNS, HE IS PREPARED TO MOVE FORWARD TOWARD RATIFICATION
OF THESE TWO TREATIES. THIS PROPOSAL IS STILL VALID AND WE EXPECT
THE SOVIET UNION TO RESPOND TO IT SERIOUSLY - AS WE HAVE RESPONDED
TO ALL SOVIET PROPOSALS.

AS FAR AS A NUCLEAR TESTING MORATORIUM IS CONCERNED, THE US
POSITION HAS NOT CHANGED. FROM THE TIME THAT THE SOVIETS
ANNOUNCED THEIR MORATORIUM LAST YEAR, WE MADE CLEAR WHY A
MORATORIUM IS NOT IN THE SECURITY INTERESTS OF THE US, OUR FRIENDS
AND ALLIES. THE US HAS LEARNED THROUGH EXPERIENCE THAT MORATORIA
CANNOT BE COUNTED ON TO LEAD TO THE ENHANCED SECURITY DESIRED.
WHILE THE TOTAL ELIMINATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS REMAINS AN ULTIMATE
GOAL, NUCLEAR WEAPONS REMAIN NEEDED TO DETER AGGRESSION AND SECURE
THE PEACE. AS LONG AS THIS IS THE CASE, A MODERATE LEVEL OF
NUCLEAR TESTING IS NEEDED TO ENSURE THE CONTINUED RELIABILITY,
SAFETY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF OUR NUCLEAR DETERRENT.

REGARDING A MEETING BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND GENERAL SECRETARY
GORBACHEV, THE TWO AGREED AT GENEVA QUOTE TO MEET AGAIN IN THE
NEAREST FUTURE UNQUOTE, AND THE GENERAL SECRETARY ACCEPTED THE
PRESIDENT'S INVITATION TO COME TO THE UNITED STATES IN 1986. IN
DECEMBER, THE PRESIDENT INDICATED TO THE GENERAL SECRETARY WHICH

DATES WOULD BE MOST CONVENIENT FOR THIS MEETING. NO REPLY HAS YET BEEN RECEIVED REGARDING THIS SUGGESTION. NEVERTHELESS, THE PRESIDENT IS CONFIDENT THAT THE GENERAL SECRETARY TAKES HIS AGREEMENT SERIOUSLY AND THAT HE WILL RESPOND IN DUE COURSE.

IN THE PRESIDENT'S VIEW, MEETINGS AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL SHOULD DEAL WITH THE ENTIRE RANGE OF IMPORTANT ISSUES BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES. NUCLEAR TESTING IS ONE OF THEM - BUT ONLY ONE, AND IT IS AN ISSUE WHICH IS DIRECTLY RELATED TO OTHERS SUCH AS THE NEED - WHICH WE SEE AS THE HIGHEST PRIORITY - TO REDUCE THE LEVELS OF EXISTING NUCLEAR ARMS AND TO ESTABLISH EFFECTIVE VERIFICATION PROCEDURES. IF THE SOVIET UNION DESIRES TO MAKE SERIOUS PROGRESS ON THE QUESTION OF NUCLEAR TESTING LIMITATION, IT SHOULD ACCEPT THE PRESIDENT'S LONGSTANDING PROPOSAL THAT WE HAVE OUR EXPERTS MEET, AND SHOULD RESPOND POSITIVELY TO THE PRESIDENT'S MOST RECENT OFFER.

ENDS

WRIGHT

(REPEATED AS REQUESTED)

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