

C O N F I D E N T I A L

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PP MOSCOW

GRS 486

CONFIDENTIAL

FM FCO 131415Z SEP 82

TO PRIORITY MOSCOW

TELEGRAM NUMBER 504 OF 13 SEPTEMBER

INFO SAVING UKMIS NEW YORK, UKDEL NATO, WASHINGTON, BONN, PARIS.

SOVIET AMBASSADOR'S CALL

1. POPOV PAID HIS INTRODUCTORY CALL ON ME THIS MORNING BEFORE RETURNING TO MOSCOW FOR CONSULTATIONS, AND THE JOINT COMMISSION.
2. HE OPENED BY MAKING A PREPARED STATEMENT ON UK-SOVIET RELATIONS. IN THE SOVIET VIEW THESE WERE IMPORTANT NOT JUST IN THEMSELVES BUT ALSO FOR THEIR WIDER INTERNATIONAL EFFECT. THE SOVIET SIDE DID NOT CLOSE ITS EYES TO DIFFERENCES OF OPINION BUT SAW NO REASON WHY RELATIONS SHOULD BE FROZEN. POPOV REFERRED TO BREZHNEV'S WORDS ON UK-SOVIET RELATIONS AT THE 25TH CPSU AND TO THE FOREWORD TO THE RECENTLY PUBLISHED BIOGRAPHY OF BREZHNEV IN THE UK. THE SOVIET UNION HAD BETTER RELATIONS WITH THE FRG AND ITALY NOT TO SPEAK ABOUT FRANCE.
3. POPOV REMARKED ON THE 'REALISTIC' BRITISH POSITION ON THE SIBERIAN GAS PIPELINE PROJECT. HE HOPED FOR PROGRESS AT THE JOINT COMMISSION. TRADE WITH THE UK HAD NOT EXPANDED AT ANYTHING LIKE THE SAME RATE AS THAT WITH THE FRG OR ITALY.
4. I AGREED WITH POPOV THAT UK-SOVIET RELATIONS WERE IMPORTANT. I WISHED TO DO WHAT I COULD TO IMPROVE THEM, BUT THIS WOULD HAVE TO BE ON THE BASIS OF DEEDS NOT WORDS. I REFERRED TO THE LOSS OF CONFIDENCE RESULTING FROM THE SOVIET INVASION OF AFGHANISTAN AND ACTIVITIES

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IN CONNECTION WITH THE IMPOSITION OF MARTIAL LAW IN POLAND. THE SOVIET RECORD IN FAILING TO IMPLEMENT ITS COMMITMENTS UNDER THE CSCE HAD ALSO CAUSED CONCERN. FEELING ABOUT SUCH CASES AS SCHARANSKY, SAKHAROV AND NUDEL WENT DEEP. COULD THE SOVIET UNION NOT DO SOMETHING IN THESE CASES WHICH WOULD HELP RESTORE CONFIDENCE? AS THE CONTINUING BUILD UP OF SOVIET MILITARY CAPABILITY WAS DISTURBING. NATO MEMBER STATES WERE DEDICATED TO PEACE. THEIR FORCES WERE DEFENSIVE AND NO THREAT TO THE SOVIET UNION. I HAD MADE SOME PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF EAST-WEST RELATIONS IN MY SPEECH IN DENMARK ON 10 SEPTEMBER. I HOPED THEY WOULD BE STUDIED IN MOSCOW. (COPY OF SPEECH BY BAG).

5. POPOV APPEARED FLUSTERED BY REFERENCES TO SAKHAROV ETC AND CLAIMED THAT IT WAS A PURELY INTERNAL MATTER WHAT THE SOVIET UNION DID WITH CRIMINALS AND WHETHER THEY WERE CONFINED WHERE THEY HAD NO CONTACT WITH THE WESTERN PRESS. HE RETURNED, HOWEVER, TO THE DESIRE TO IMPROVE RELATIONS AND STRENGTHEN PEACE (NOFUN ETC).

6. UNDER BILATERAL BUSINESS I MENTIONED STD RATES AND TELEPHONE COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION.

7. THE MEETING ENDED WITH POPOV UNDERTAKING TO REPORT TO GROMYKO BEFORE MY LUNCH WITH HIM IN NEW YORK. IN THIS CONNECTION HE ASKED FOR CLARIFICATION OVER OUR POSITION ON THE MIDDLE EAST. HOW COULD WE SUPPORT THE REAGAN PROPOSALS? I EXPLAINED THAT THEY SEEMED A REALISTIC BASIS FOR NEGOTIATIONS DEALING AS THEY DID WITH THE BASIC QUESTIONS OF THE SECURITY OF ISRAEL AND THE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIANS: THEY REPRESENTED A POSITION CLOSE, THOUGH NOT IDENTICAL, TO THAT OF THE TEN.

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SIR J BULLARD

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