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US/SOVIET RELATIONS

SUMMARY

1. STATE BELIEVE GORBACHEV IN BITTER MOOD OVER WESTERN HANDLING OF CHERNOBYL ISSUE. ADMINISTRATION AVOIDING POLEMICS AND WORKING TO PUT RELATIONSHIP BACK ONTO CONSTRUCTIVE PATH.

DETAIL

2. IN TALKS WITH LLEWELLYN SMITH TODAY, PALMER (DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY, STATE) SAID THAT THE RUSSIANS SEEMED BRUISED AND RESENTFUL OVER WHAT THEY SAW AS US (AND WESTERN) ATTEMPTS TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THEIR DIFFICULTIES OVER CHERNOBYL. ARMAND HAMMER, WHO HAD SEEN GORBACHEV ON 16 MAY (MOSCOW TELNO 593), HAD FOUND HIM "BOILING MAD". GORBACHEV SEEMED TO HAVE BEEN PARTICULARLY STUNG BY THE TOKYO SUMMIT TEXT ON CHERNOBYL. HAMMER HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT HE HAD NOT READ IT, AND URGED HIM TO DO SO. PALMER ADDED THAT BESSMERTNYK (NOW DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR RELATIONS WITH THE US) HAD BEEN IN SIMILAR MOOD DURING A VISIT HERE 10 DAYS AGO.

3. PALMER MAINTAINED THAT ALL CONCERNED IN THE ADMINISTRATION, INCLUDING SHULTZ AND THE PRESIDENT, AGREED THAT US POLICY MUST TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE PRESENT SOVIET FEELING OF VULNERABILITY. THE US WISHED TO MAKE A FURTHER EFFORT TO PUT THE PRESENT STRAINS BEHIND THEM AND GET THE RELATIONSHIP BACK ON COURSE. THE PRESIDENT HAD WRITTEN TO GORBACHEV TWICE IN THE LAST 6 WEEKS. STATE WERE NOW PREPARING A FURTHER OFFER OF COOPERATION POST-CHERNOBYL. THIS WOULD GIVE GORBACHEV CREDIT FOR THE POSITIVE PROPOSALS IN HIS SPEECH OF 14 MAY, AND SUGGEST MERGING THEM WITH THOSE FROM TOKYO.

4. ON HIGH-LEVEL MEETINGS, PALMER SAID THAT SHEVARDNADZE HAD TOLD US AMBASSADOR HARTMAN THAT IT WAS STILL TOO SOON TO REARRANGE HIS MEETING WITH SHULTZ. PALMER WAS CONCERNED THAT IF THERE WERE NO FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING UNTIL THE TRADITIONAL ENCOUNTER IN THE MARGINS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN LATE SEPTEMBER, THERE WOULD THEN BE VERY LITTLE TIME TO LAY THE GROUNDWORK FOR CONCRETE RESULTS FROM A SUMMIT IN DECEMBER. AS FOR WHAT THE RUSSIANS NOW REGARD AS SUFFICIENT CONCRETE RESULTS, PALMER SAID THAT THEY WERE IN EFFECT INVITING THE AMERICANS TO SELECT THE AREAS. HE ADDED THAT US PRIORITIES REMAINED AGREEMENT ON THE KEY ELEMENTS OF START AND INF REDUCTIONS AGREEMENTS. THE

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ADMINISTRATION WERE PUZZLED AS TO WHY GORBACHEV HAD GIVEN SUCH PROMINENCE TO NUCLEAR TESTING SINCE IT MUST HAVE BEEN CLEAR TO HIM THAT THERE WAS NO PROSPECT OF A DEAL WITH THE US ON THIS ISSUE.

5. THOMAS (DAS EUROPE) ALSO SAID THAT TIME WOULD SOON RUN OUT FOR SETTING UP A PRODUCTIVE SUMMIT FOR DECEMBER WHICH WOULD OPEN UP THE PROSPECT OF AN ARMS CONTROL DEAL WITHIN THE LIFETIME OF THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION. ANYTHING THE UK COULD DO TO GET THIS ACROSS TO THE RUSSIANS WOULD BE USEFUL.

6. COMMENT: PALMER HABITUALLY SHOWS MORE CONCERN ABOUT SOVIET SENSITIVITIES THAN DO MOST OTHERS IN THE ADMINISTRATION. HIS ASSESSMENT OF GORBACHEV'S MOOD POST-CHERNOBYL IS INTERESTING, BUT SOME OF HIS COLLEAGUES MAY BE LESS CONCERNED ABOUT IT THAN HE IS.

WRIGHT

REPEATED SAVING AS REQUEST

EAST WEST & US/SOVIET RELATIONS
LIMITED

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