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FM FCO 241034Z APR 81
TO IMMEDIATE MOSCOW
TELEGRAM NUMBER 240 OF 24 APRIL
AND TO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON, PARIS AND DOHA (FOR PS/PRIME MINISTER)

FOLLOWING TELEGRAM NOW REPEATED TO YOU AT REQUEST OF DEPARTMENT WAS SENT TO BONN TELEGRAM NUMBER 164 OF 23 APRIL.

MEETING WITH SOVIET AMBASSADOR AT NORTHOLT

1. THE MOST STRIKING ASPECT OF THE COMMUNICATION DELIVERED BY POPOV IS ITS INDICATION OF WILLINGNESS TO DEVELOP THE BILATERAL POLITICAL DIALOGUE, BY IMPLICATION AT A HIGHER LEVEL. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS WILL BE CLEARER WHEN WE KNOW WHETHER OR NOT THE COMMUNICATION IS A ROUND-ROBIN DELIVERED TO ALL WESTERN COUNTRIES AND HAVE HAD A CHANCE TO COMPARE NOTES IF (AS SEEMS LIKELY) IT IS. AT THE LEAST, THE COMMUNICATION GIVES US AN OPENING TO PUT FORWARD PROPOSALS TO THE RUSSIANS IF WE CHOOSE, AND THE RUSSIANS WILL NO DOUBT CONSIDER THAT THE BALL IS NOW IN OUR COURT.

2. WE HAVE THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS ON OTHER POINTS:

(I) TNF MORATORIUM: BASICALLY A RESTATEMENT OF THE MORATORIUM PROPOSAL PUT FORWARD IN BREZHNEV'S CPSU CONGRESS SPEECH IN FEBRUARY, AND REPEATED FREQUENTLY SINCE. IF THE COMMUNICATION IS A ROUND ROBIN, THE TIMING WOULD FIT NICE Y WITH THAT OF THE NAC MEETING IN ROME. THE ONLY NEW ELEMENT IS THE SUGGESTION THAT 'THE OBLIGATIONS OF THE SIDES IN CONNECTION WITH THE MORATORIUM COULD BE AGREED UPON EVEN BEFORE THE OPENING OF THE OFFICIAL TALKS.' ANY SUCH AGREEMENT COULD HARDLY BE REACHED WITHOUT A MEETING, AND IT IS CONCEIVABLE THAT THE RUSSIANS HAVE THE IDEA OF A MULTILATERAL *ONE IN ROME*

KBPD. THE AIM MAY BE TO MAKE IT HARDER FOR MINISTERS IN ROME TO REJECT THE MORATORIUM IN STANDARD TERMS, BY OFFERING THE PROSPECT OF DISCUSSION ON THE POINTS IN DISPUTE.

(II) THEATRE BALANCE: GENERALLY STANDARD, EXCEPT FOR THE SPECIFIC CLAIM THAT NATO HAS A MEDIUM RANGE WARHEAD ADVANTAGE OF 1.5:1. AS FAR AS WE KNOW THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THE RUSSIANS HAVE MADE COMPARISONS OF NUMBERS OF WARHEADS RATHER THAN DELIVERY SYSTEMS, BUT THE FIGURES ARE MEANINGLESS WITHOUT DETAILS OF THE DATA BASE. THE CLAIM CANNOT BE SUBSTANTIATED ON ANY BASE THAT WE WOULD REGARD AS REASONABLE BUT THE AIM MAY ONCE AGAIN BE TO ENCOURAGE DISCUSSION OF THIS AND RELATED QUESTIONS.

(III) CSCE: A CAUTIOUS ASSESSMENT OF THE NNA PAPER, BUT SPECIFIC POINTS ALL CONCENTRATED ON CBMS AND THE PROSPECTS FOR A DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE. SOVIET OFFER TO APPLY CBMS TO THE WHOLE OF THE EUROPEAN PART OF THE SOVIET UNION IS REPEATED, BUT WITH MORE THAN USUAL EMPHASIS ON THE NEED FOR RECIPROCAL STEPS BY THE WEST AND CLEAR IMPLICATION THAT THE PRECISE SCOPE OF THE AREA OF APPLICATION MAY BE FOR THE CONFERENCE ITSELF RATHER THAN MADRID. THE CRITERION OF 'MILITARY SIGNIFICANCE' IS IDENTIFIED WITH EXISTING SOVIET PROPOSALS FOR NEW CBMS. CONFIRMATION OF THE EQUIVOCAL NATURE OF SOVIET REFERENCES AT MADRID TO THE OTHER TWO CRITERIA ('POLITICAL OBLIGATION' AND 'VERIFIABILITY') BY INDICATING THAT ONLY 'SOME' CBMS SHOULD BE BINDING AND BY RESTRICTING THE SCOPE OF VERIFICATION. ALL THIS IS PRETTY TOUGH, THOUGH THERE IS AN INDICATION OF FLEXIBILITY OVER THE 'FIREBREAK' IN THE SUGGESTION THAT THERE MIGHT BE EITHER ONE CONFERENCE IN TWO STAGES, DEALING WITH CBMS AND DISARMAMENT RESPECTIVELY, OR TWO CONFERENCES TO DEAL WITH THE TWO SUBJECTS IN TURN. TOO EARLY TO TELL WHETHER THIS ON THE WHOLE DISCOURAGING SECTION IS A TACTIC INTENDED TO LESSEN WESTERN EXPECTATIONS ON THE RESUMPTION AT MADRID OR A SUBSTANTIVE INDICATION OF LACK OF FLEXIBILITY IN THE SOVIET POSITION. EXPERIENCE SUGGESTS THAT THE FORMER IS MORE LIKELY.

(IV) AFGHANISTAN/THE GULF: NOTHING NEW.

3. WE SHALL REPEAT THIS TELEGRAM TO NATO AND OTHER POSTS TO COINCIDE WITH THE ADDRESSEES OF YOUR TELEGRAM GIVING THE TEXT OF THE COMMUNICATION.

ENDS.

CARRINGTON



With the compliments of

EAST EUROPEAN AND SOVIET DEPARTMENT

Translation of message handed to the
Secretary of State by Soviet Ambassador
Popov at Heathrow Airport, 23 April 1961

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE
LONDON, SW1A 2AH

TRANSLATION

1. The Soviet side notes with satisfaction the readiness of the British government to develop a political dialogue on topical international problems. The Soviet Union's view on ways of solving these problems is contained in the specific foreign policy proposals put forward in L I Brezhnev's Report at the 26th Congress of the CPSU and set out by him in the message to Prime Minister M Thatcher. The main import of the new Soviet initiatives is to eliminate the danger of war, to open the way towards stopping the arms race, and to strengthen détente.

An arms race unleashed with the purpose of achieving unilateral military advantages gives no answer to the crucial problems facing mankind, but only aggravates them and, - what is more, - to an immeasurably greater degree than before. The interests of preserving peace call for the maximum of restraint and for a sober and far-sighted approach to the conduct of international affairs and for not permitting disagreements to escape from the bounds of the peaceful settlement of disputes and from being transformed into military conflict situations. In our view, the complex and at times conflictual nature of the realities of today's world emphasise the importance of a responsible inter-state dialogue with a view to easing the situation.

A realistic approach to the solution of international problems leaves no room for the so-called concept of "linking" truly urgent issues with contrived ones. Attempts to put such a concept into practice in fact divert away from constructive negotiations and businesslike cooperation.

The Soviet Union considers it necessary to conduct an active dialogue with other states, using for this purpose all existing possibilities up to and including the convocation of a special session of the Security Council with the participation of the highest leaders of the Council's member states, to discuss urgent

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international problems existing in and beyond Europe, and to seek keys for the improvement of the situation in the world.

Having made new foreign policy initiatives, the Soviet Union does not consider that it^{is} as it were, laying down the only possible formula for bringing about a turn for the better in world affairs. In his speech in Prague on 7 April L I Brezhnev noted that "if anyone else has other reasonable proposals, we are ready to examine them too".

All Soviet proposals for limiting the arms race and strengthening international security remain in force. This applies fully to the whole complex of problems which have at various times been discussed between the Soviet Union and United States and above all the problems of limiting strategic armaments.

2. In order to prevent the nuclear missile confrontation in Europe passing to a new and more dangerous level, the Soviet Union has proposed the establishment of a moratorium on the deployment in Europe of new medium-range nuclear missile weapons of the NATO states and the USSR, ie to freeze quantitatively and qualitatively the existing level of these systems, including the US forward-based nuclear systems in this region.

The Soviet Union is prepared here and now, without awaiting the outcome of the relevant negotiations, to halt the implementation of its current plans for modernising medium-range nuclear weapons in Europe. This reinforces our proposals on the possibility of reducing such weapons as a result of negotiations, and the scope of this reduction, moreover, could even be quite considerable, if our partners were prepared for this. The moratorium would enter into force immediately after the opening of negotiations on the limitation of nuclear weapons in Europe and would remain in force throughout the entire negotiations. The obligations of the sides in connection with the moratorium could be agreed even before the opening of the official negotiations.

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We cannot agree with the assertion that the moratorium would perpetuate the allegedly "serious imbalance" in favour of the USSR in medium-range nuclear weapons in Europe.

First, at the present time there exists in Europe an approximate equality in the relevant types of weapons. NATO has here a powerful grouping of nuclear systems capable of reaching the territory of the USSR. The Soviet Union's nuclear weapons in Europe do not exceed this level. In analysing the correlation of nuclear forces of the sides, one should not take in isolation one single type of weapon, for example, ground-based missiles. Nuclear potentials should be considered as a complex, since only on this basis can the principle of the equal security of the sides be maintained.

Secondly, the Soviet Union, in replacing old missiles with new ones for the purpose of preserving nuclear parity, not only did not increase by a single unit the aggregate number of medium-range nuclear weapon carriers but even decreased that number, - with the deployment of each new ("SS-20") missile one or two old missiles in the Soviet Union were simultaneously withdrawn.

Thirdly, as regards the number of the nuclear charges of medium-range ~~weapons~~ in Europe, the advantage currently favours NATO by approximately 1.5 to 1. The replacement undertaken of old missiles by new ones has not led to the Soviet Union acquiring superiority in this field. And the aggregate yield of the charges of Soviet medium-range missiles has not increased but even diminished.

Consequently, the introduction of a moratorium would only entrench the existing approximate equality and would open the way for the establishment of such equality at a lower level. Conversely, if, as planned, the NATO countries deploy additionally in Europe 572 medium-range missiles, then a more than 1.5 superiority in medium-range nuclear weapon carriers will be created on the NATO side. Moreover, ^{to} we cannot but take into account the fact that in relation/the Soviet Union this US weapon is strategic in nature. It is common knowledge that the Soviet Union does not possess on the /territory

territory of other countries such weapons capable of striking targets on US territory. Thus, the deployment of further American medium-range missiles in Europe would disrupt the strategic parity between the USSR and USA and would make the situation less stable. Such a turn of events would compel the Soviet Union to take the necessary countermeasures so as to not to permit the worsening of the strategic situation and in order to reestablish the balance, but at a higher level.

In drawing attention to the moratorium proposal, the Soviet side expresses the hope that the British government will carefully analyse once again all its aspects.

As regards the Soviet/American negotiations on the limitation of nuclear armaments in Europe the first round of which had took place in October/November last year, the Soviet side is prepared to resume them at any time, so it is now only up to the American side.

3. The Soviet Union considers it important to ensure that the Madrid meeting ends with results and it favours adopting understanding on all sections of the Final Act. We attach great importance to reaching agreement on convening a conference on military détente and disarmament in Europe and are ready for reasonable compromises. We could accept the option whereby a single conference would be held, with confidence-building measures being discussed at the first stage and issues of actual disarmament at the second. But we would also be agreeable to the holding of 2 conferences, having in mind that the first conference would be devoted to confidence-building measures and the second to disarmament issues.

The Soviet Union has expressed its agreement to a considerable expansion of the zone of application of confidence-building measures, applying them to the entire European part of the USSR, - subject to

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a corresponding extension of the zone by Western states. The specific parameters of the zone of application of confidence-building measures can be determined at the conference itself. What is required now is clarity on the approach in principle. Firstly, this means mutuality of obligations. Secondly, - their balance and the impermissibility of infringing the security interests of participating states.

The equality of states participating in the All-European Conference must be ensured in their rights and duties regarding confidence-building ^{measures} and in the All-European process as a whole. No one must have any privileges in comparison with others.

(Unilateral extension by the Soviet Union of the zone of confidence-building measures to the entire European part of its territory without reciprocal steps from the West would not correspond with the principle of equal rights and duties of all states participating in the All-European Conference.

In the decision on the convocation of the conference it would be possible to envisage, alongside the extension of the zone of confidence-building measures, an increase in the number of these measures (notification not only of major exercises by ground forces but also of major naval and air exercises and also of major troop movements, and the renunciation of military exercises involving the participation of more than 40-50,000 men). This would give the confidencebuilding measures a more important and more militarily significant nature as compared with the measures applied at present. Furthermore, the possibility would not be excluded of participants in the conference undertaking political obligations to carry out some of the confidence-building measures and of establishing, in certain circumstances, forms of verification making use of national means which would correspond with the nature of the specific confidence building measures and which could be agreed between the sides.

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At present, when the Madrid meeting is in recess, it is necessary to give serious thought to the current situation, bearing in mind the need for further development of the All-European process in the interests of peace and détente. In our view, the draft final document tabled by the neutral and non-aligned countries facilitates to some extent the achievement of mutually acceptable solutions. In Moscow it is hoped that the British government will make efforts for the constructive completion of the Madrid meeting.

4. The Soviet side is convinced that even the most acute problems in East/West relations can be solved, given the preservation of the legitimate interests of the sides. This applies also to the Middle East problem on which, in our view, there are and could be found new points of coincidence between the positions of the Soviet Union and Britain, and also to the settlement of the situation around Afghanistan, on which serious differences persist. A subject of real solutions could also be questions relating to the ensuring of peace and security in the Persian Gulf, if all interested parties show a desire to seek such solutions and to refrain from actions, particularly of a military nature, which might complicate the situation in that area. Specific proposals on this matter have been made by L I Brezhnev, including also those in his recent message to Prime Minister M Thatcher.

5. There is satisfaction in Moscow with the statement by the British government of its readiness to pursue a constructive course in East/West relations and to cooperate with the Soviet Union, on the basis of joint efforts, in specific actions to strengthen confidence, consolidate international security and develop mutually advantageous relations between our countries.

Such an approach meets with understanding on the part of the Soviet Union. We are in favour of putting to work the considerable potential for cooperation created over the years in order to seek

solutions to the urgent problems of curbing the arms race and strengthening détente, and of using existing opportunities in various fields of bilateral Soviet/British relations, giving them full development and translating them into specific actions. We are in favour of giving the political dialogue between our countries a level and content which would be in keeping with the requirements of the aggravated international situation.

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