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FROM MOSCOW 170555Z MAY

TO ROUTINE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 519 OF 17 MAY

INFO ROUTINE UKDEL MADRID AND WASHINGTON

HUMAN RIGHTS.

1. PRAVDA ON 14 MAY CARRIED A LONG ARTICLE BY THE VETERAN COMMENTATOR YURI ZHUKOV (WHO IS ALSO CHAIRMAN OF THE OFFICIAL SOVIET PEACE COMMITTEE) ENTITLED " MRS THATCHER'S GLASS HOUSE ".
2. THE ARTICLE , RECALLING THE BRITISH PROVERB ABOUT THOSE IN GLASS HOUSES NOT THROWING STONES, CRITICISED MR RIFKIND'S REFERENCE IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS TO HMG'S REPEATED PLEAS FOR " A RENEGADE CONVICTED IN THE USSR FOR ESPIONAGE FOR THE USA ". THE SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTRY HAD NOT DEMANDED THE RELEASE OF THE 5,000 PRISONERS HELD WITHOUT PROPER COURT PROCEEDINGS IN THE UK WHICH MR LEWIS MP HAD MENTIONED TO MR RIFKIND. THE SOVIET UNION STRICTLY ADHERED TO THE PRINCIPLE OF NON-INTERFERENCE WRITTEN INTO THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT EVEN THOUGH SOVIET PUBLIC OPINION FELT COMPLETE SOLIDARITY WITH PROTESTS BY BRITISH PUBLIC OPINION AGAINST BLATANT INFRINGEMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE UK. ZHUKOV THEN DESCRIBED AT SOME LENGTH ALLEGED INFRINGEMENTS OF THE RIGHT TO WORK (HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT) ; AND OF POLITICAL RIGHTS (PEOPLE IN THE SOVIET UNION HAD NOT FORGOTTEN THE ICY INDIFFERENCE OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TOWARDS THE DYING HUNGER STRIKERS IN NORTHERN IRELAND) ; RACIAL DISCRIMINATION ; AND " MOST REPULSIVE OF ALL " , THE SUPPRESSION OF THE RIGHT TO LIFE AND PEACE (ARRESTS OF THE WOMEN OF GREENHAM COMMON) .
3. IT IS NOT OFTEN THAT A COMMENTATOR OF ZHUKOV'S SENIORITY DEVOTES A FULL LENGTH ARTICLE TO THE UK . IT IS A SHARP RESPONSE TO MR RIFKIND'S APPEAL ON BEHALF OF SHCHARANSKY . BUT SINCE THE LATTER IS NOT ACTUALLY NAMED , THE ARTICLE DOES NOT NECESSARILY IMPLY ANYTHING ABOUT THE PROSPECTS OF HIS EVENTUAL RELEASE . TASS AND NOVOSTI HAVE NOT DRAWN ATTENTION TO THE ARTICLE .

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No. 10 DOWNING STREET

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