

RESTRICTED

FM UKMIS GENEVA

TO DESKBY 211515Z FCO

TELNO 429

OF 211353Z NOVEMBER 1985

INFO DESKBY 211515Z MODLN AND UKDEL NATO

INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON, MOSCOW

INFO PRIORITY PARIS, BONN, BERNE, ROME, UKMIS NEW YORK, UKDIS GENEVA

IN NEW YORK, NEW DELHI

*Action for COOPERHAM*

MY TWO MIPTS: US/SOVIET SUMMIT: GORBACHEV PRESS CONFERENCE.

1. IN A PRESS CONFERENCE LASTING OVER AN HOUR AND A HALF THIS MORNING (21 NOVEMBER) GORBACHEV SUMMARISED THE RESULTS OF THE SUMMIT, GAVE A LONG PERSONAL INTERPRETATION OF ITS SIGNIFICANCE, AND ANSWERED NUMEROUS QUESTIONS FROM WESTERN AND EASTERN PRESS. HE SPOKE IN A STRAIGHTFORWARD, LIVELY AND CONVINCING MANNER, LARGELY OFF THE CUFF.

2. GORBACHEV SAID THAT THE TALKS HAD COVERED ALL OF THE ITEMS ON THE ORIGINAL AGENDA, AND THAT THEY HAD BEEN FRANK, LIVELY ('ALMOST TOO LIVELY AT ONE POINT') AND PRODUCTIVE. THE TWO LEADERS HAD DISCUSSED NOT ONLY US-SOVIET RELATIONS, BUT INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AS A WHOLE. REGIONAL ISSUES HAD NOT BEEN EXAMINED IN DETAIL, BUT DISCUSSION HAD CENTRED RATHER ON THE GENERAL NEED FOR GREATER STABILITY IN TROUBLED AREAS. IN THE CURRENT DIFFICULT POLITICAL REALITIES OF THE WORLD, THE FIRST STEPS WOULD BE HARD ONES.

3. BOTH SIDES WERE FULLY AWARE OF EACH OTHER'S GLOBAL INTERESTS. IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT THESE SHOULD NOT BE A SOURCE OF CONFRONTATION AND THAT BOTH SIDES SHOULD ACT RESPONSIBLY. SOVIET POLICIES IN THE WORLD WERE UNAMBIGUOUS AND OPEN. WHERE THERE WERE OBSTACLES TO PROGRESS, THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE SOVIET WILL TO CLEAR THE PATH. IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT BOTH SIDES WORKED TOGETHER ON THIS.

4. THE CENTRAL THREAD IN ALL THEIR DISCUSSIONS, HOWEVER, HAD BEEN ARMS CONTROL. FAILURE TO RESOLVE THIS ISSUE WOULD NULLIFY THE VALUE OF ANY OTHER AGREEMENTS REACHED. SDI WOULD INEVITABLY EXTEND THE ARMS RACE. IN REALITY SDI WAS NOT THE IMPENETRABLE DEFENSIVE SHIELD THAT HAD BEEN SUGGESTED. IT WOULD MEAN THE CREATION OF MORE OFFENSIVE WEAPONS. THERE WERE QUITE ENOUGH OF THESE AS THINGS STOOD. IN ADDITION THE POTENTIAL FOR ERRORS AND MISHAPS WAS UNACCEPTABLE. COMPUTERS WOULD TAKE OVER IF SDI WERE EVER IMPLEMENTED: LEADERS WOULD HAVE INSUFFICIENT TIME TO TALK AND CONSIDER MATTERS.

5. IF THE STAR WARS DOOR WERE FIRMLY CLOSED NOW, THE SOVIET UNION WOULD BE PREPARED TO ENGAGE IN RADICAL CUTBACKS OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS. IN ADDITION, THE DIFFICULT ISSUE OF VERIFICATION COULD BE SOLVED. THE SOVIET UNION WOULD OPEN ITS LABORATORIES TO ANY SORT OF CHECKS. THERE REMAINED, HOWEVER, A LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF EACH OTHER'S REASONING ON THE SDI ISSUE. THE SOVIET UNION HAD UNDERTAKEN NOT TO STRIKE FIRST. THIS WOULD SEEM TO REMOVE ANY NEED FOR SDI.

6. THE WEST ALSO SEEMED TO BE UNDER THE MILITARY AND POLITICAL ILLUSION THAT IF THE AMERICANS WENT AHEAD WITH SDI, THIS WOULD LEAVE THE SOVIET UNION BEHIND. THE INTRODUCTION OF SDI WOULD CERTAINLY 'COMPLICATE MATTERS' FOR THE SOVIET UNION, BUT THEY WOULD RESPOND AS THEY HAD DONE BEFORE AND CLOSE THE GAP.

7. THE SUMMIT MARKED A WATERSHED IN HISTORY. WHAT WAS NEEDED NOW WAS AN HONEST ATTITUDE BY BOTH SIDES. THE SUMMIT HAD ALLOWED AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE DISAGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, AND A REMOVAL OF SOME OF THE PREJUDICES. CREATION OF TRUST WAS A DIFFICULT AND NOT AN INSTANT PROCESS, BUT GENEVA HAD BEEN A GOOD FIRST STEP. THE OVERALL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TALKS HAD BEEN THE CREATION OF THE POSSIBILITY TO MOVE FORWARD. GORBACHEV LOOKED FORWARD OPTIMISTICALLY TO THE FUTURE, AND SAID HE BELIEVED THE WORLD WAS A SAFER PLACE THANKS TO THE GENEVA TALKS.

MOSS