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MY TELNO. 2937: THE US ATTITUDE TO CHANGE IN EAST GERMANY
AND EASTERN EUROPE
SUMMARY

1. US POLICIES STILL EVOLVING UNDER PRESSURE OF EVENTS BUT CAUTION LIKELY TO REMAIN THE KEYNOTE. CONTINUITY ON ARMS CONTROL. EFFORT TO EXPLORE THE GROUND WITH THE RUSSIANS FOR MANAGING CHANGE, RATHER THAN CONCRETE PROPOSALS FOR THE FUTURE OF GERMANY. IMPORTANCE OF THE COMMUNITY. AMERICANS LIKELY TO WANT TO REMAIN IN CLOSE CONTACT, INCLUDING ON CONTINGENCY PLANNING.

DETAIL

2. THE PACE OF RECENT EVENTS HAS SO FAR PREVENTED THE AMERICANS FROM MAKING A FIRM ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPLICATIONS OR DEFINING A POLICY OVER THE LONGER TERM. A COMBINATION OF INSTINCT AND PRUDENCE HAS IMPELLED THEM TO OFFER A SIGNIFICANT MEASURE OF REASSURANCE TO THE USSR AND TO KEEP IN CLOSE CONTACT WITH THEIR PRINCIPAL ALLIES, ESPECIALLY THE FRG. THEIR MAJOR AIM HAS BEEN TO CONTRIBUTE TO COMMON EFFORTS TO ENSURING THAT THE PROCESS OF CHANGE REMAINS ORDERLY. US PUBLIC OPINION HAS SEEMED GENERALLY TO ACCEPT THE VALIDITY OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S APPROACH ALTHOUGH PRESS SPECULATION HAS INEVITABLY RUN FAR AHEAD OF CURRENT REALITIES.

3. BEFORE THE DISINTEGRATION OF THE OLD ORDER IN EAST GERMANY, US POLICY HAD ALREADY LARGELY RECOGNISED THAT CURRENT SOVIET FLEXIBILITY PRESENTED OPPORTUNITIES TO BE SEIZED. THIS ATTITUDE WILL HAVE BEEN ENCOURAGED OVER THE LAST FEW DAYS BUT THERE ARE ALSO SIGNS THAT IT HAS BEEN TEMPERED BY AN ANXIETY NOT TO GIVE THE RUSSIANS THE IMPRESSION THAT THE AMERICANS ARE SEEKING TO EXPLOIT CURRENT UNREST. GATES MADE IT CLEAR TO WESTON LAST WEEK FOR EXAMPLE (MY TELEGRAM NO. 2939) THAT THE AMERICANS WERE SENSITIVE TO THE POTENTIAL DAMAGE THAT MIGHT RESULT FROM BEING ACCUSED OF FOMENTING UNREST IN EASTERN EUROPE, TO SAY NOTHING OF SUCH EVEN MORE DELICATE QUESTIONS AS THE BALTIC STATES. A NUMBER OF POSITION PAPERS HAVE BEEN PRODUCED, AND SEVERAL TORN UP, SOME BEGIN TO CONSIDER WHAT

MIGHT BE THE LONGER TERM POSITION IF CURRENT HOPES OF A STABLE PROCESS OF INNER GERMAN RAPPROCHEMENT ARE REALISED. THIS IN TURN RAISES THE QUESTION OF HOW BEST TO MANAGE THE US SOVIET SECURITY RELATIONSHIP WITHIN EUROPE. BUT THESE SO FAR REPRESENT ONLY AN ATTEMPT AT MIND CLEARING AND HAVE NOT YET BEEN TRANSLATED INTO VIABLE POLICY OPTIONS.

4. THE LIKELY UPSHOT IS THAT CAUTION WILL REMAIN THE WATCHWORD, ESPECIALLY IN THE PERIOD UP TO THE 2/3 DECEMBER SUMMIT BECAUSE

(A) THE AMERICANS LOOK LIKELY TO WORK FOR A CONTINUATION OF THE ARMS CONTROL PROCESS ON PRESENT LINES. THEY WILL NOT WISH TO BE HURRIED INTO ANY RE-ASSESSMENT OF THEIR CURRENT CFE POSTURE. THEIR PRINCIPAL AIM WILL BE TO CONCENTRATE ON NATO SOLIDARITY AND TO ENSURE THAT THE RUSSIANS DO NOT MISUNDERSTAND THEIR INTENTIONS TOWARDS THE WARSAW PACT. BUSH HAS ALREADY MADE IT CLEAR THAT HE WANTS THE DECEMBER SUMMIT TO BE PRIMARILY AN OPPORTUNITY FOR DISCUSSION, NOT FOR MAJOR DECISION TAKING. RECENT EVENTS WILL HAVE REINFORCED THIS AND MAKE AN ARMS CONTROL SURPRISE AT THE SUMMIT EVEN LESS LIKELY.

(B) THE ADMINISTRATION, LIKE THE GERMANS, ARE WELL AWARE THAT TALK OF GERMAN REUNIFICATION IS HIGHLY PREMATURE. AND THEY DO NOT VIEW THE PROSPECT OF REUNIFICATION WITH ANY GREAT ENTHUSIASM. BUT THEY SEE A NEED TO MAKE FORTHCOMING PUBLIC NOISES IN CASE SOME FORM OF REUNIFICATION BEGINS TO LOOK MORE LIKELY OVER TIME. IN THE MEANTIME THEIR PRIME CONCERN IS FOR STABILITY, AND THEREFORE THE PRESERVATION OF THE TWO ALLIANCES, DESPITE THE POTENTIAL CONFLICT BETWEEN THAT AND INNER GERMAN RAPPROCHEMENT I HAVE SEEN NOTHING TO INDICATE THAT PRESIDENT BUSH MAY WISH TO PUT CONCRETE PROPOSALS TO GORBACHEV FOR THE FUTURE OF GERMANY OR EASTERN EUROPE IN GENERAL. HE IS MORE LIKELY TO WANT TO EXPLORE THE GROUND FOR MANAGING CHANGE WITH THE SOVIET UNION, STRESSING THAT STABILITY OVER THE LONGER RUN IS NOW IMPOSSIBLE WITHOUT RADICAL ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CHANGE, BUT STOPPING SHORT OF PRESSING THE RUSSIANS ON THE LONGER TERM FUTURE OF THE GDR AND THE WARSAW PACT.

(C) EVENTS HAVE ALSO ENHANCED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY IN AMERICAN EYES. THEY SEE IT AS A FACTOR FOR STABILITY WHICH MAY BE ABLE TO CHANNEL A PROCESS OF CHANGE IN WAYS NOT OPEN TO NATO. US HOPES MAY OUTFRAN SOME OF THE REALITIES. BUT THE ESSENTIAL POINT IS THAT THEY SEE IT AS AT LEAST AS MUCH UP TO THE EUROPEANS AS TO THEMSELVES TO SHAPE THE FUTURE. THEY HOPE THAT OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE FRG AND

FRANCE WILL HELP TO PROMOTE THIS.

5. FOR THE TIME BEING THEREFORE THE AMERICANS WILL WANT TO MAINTAIN ESPECIALLY CLOSE CONTACT WITH THEIR MAJOR ALLIES SO THAT THE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SOVIET UNION IS COLLECTIVELY MANAGED TO PREVENT HASTY SOVIET ACTION. THIS WILL MEAN AGREEING AN APPROACH ON THE WESTERN SIDE BEFORE TACKLING THE RUSSIANS, NOT A RETURN TO THE CHIMERA OF AN ALLIED FOUR POWER DIRECTORATE FOR GERMANY. WITH LUCK, THE ADMINISTRATION SHOULD BE ABLE TO MAINTAIN A RELATIVELY LOW PUBLIC PROFILE OVER THE NEXT SEVERAL DAYS, PARTICULARLY IF THE POSITION IN THE GDR BEGINS TO STABILISE. IF IT DOES NOT, PUBLIC AND CONGRESSIONAL PRESSURES COULD RISE RAPIDLY. AS THE SUMMIT DRAWS NEAR, THE PROCESS OF CONTINGENCY PLANNING FOR VARIOUS POSSIBLE SCENARIOS WILL ANYWAY INTENSIFY. GENSCHER WILL BE IN WASHINGTON ON 21 NOVEMBER AND THE PRIME MINISTER WILL BE ABLE TO EXPLORE AMERICAN THINKING IN DEPTH WITH BUSH ON 24 NOVEMBER

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ADDITIONAL

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