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TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

SECRET VIA SRF CHANNELS MH70665 SECTION 01 OF 02

MOSCOW: PLEASE DELIVER THIS MESSAGE TO AMBASSADOR TOON
IMMEDIATELY UPON OPENING OF BUSINESS.

DECEMBER 21, 1977

TO: AMBASSADOR TOON
FROM: ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI

PLEASE CONVEY THE FOLLOWING TO BREZHNEV PERSONALLY OR, FAILING
THAT, TO GROMYKO.

BEGIN TEXT:

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT:

WITH THE APPROACHING HOLIDAYS, I WISH TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF
OUR CORRESPONDENCE TO WISH YOU PERSONALLY, YOUR FAMILY, AND THE
SOVIET PEOPLE THE VERY BEST FOR THE COMING YEAR. LET US HOPE THAT
IT WILL BRING US ALL CLOSER TO THE GOAL THAT WE SHARE: A GENUINE
PEACE AND CLOSER FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN OUR PEOPLES, AND ALL THE PEOPLES
OF THE WORLD.

I WAS ENCOURAGED BY YOUR LETTER OF NOVEMBER 14, AND I AM HOPE-
FUL THAT BEFORE TOO LONG WE WILL BE REACHING AGREEMENT IN A NUMBER
OF AREAS OF IMPORTANCE TO OUR TWO COUNTRIES. OUR DELEGATIONS ARE
MAKING GOOD PROGRESS IN REGARDS TO STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATIONS AND
THE COMPREHENSIVE TEST BAN; I AM ALSO ENCOURAGED BY THE FACT THAT
WE HAVE OPENED NEW DISCUSSIONS REGARDING ARMS TRANSFERS, AND THAT
OUR DELEGATIONS ARE FRUITFULLY PURSUING RECIPROCAL ARMS RESTRAINT
IN THE INDIAN OCEAN. IN SPITE OF CONTINUING DIFFERENCES BETWEEN
OUR TWO COUNTRIES, AND THESE DIFFERENCES ADMITTEDLY ARE DEEP-ROOTED
AND WILL TAKE TIME TO FADE, WE ARE MAKING STEADY PROGRESS IN
WIDENING THE SCOPE OF OUR COLLABORATION.

***** WWSR COMMENT *****

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AT THE SAME TIME, I WOULD BE LESS THAN CANDID IF I DID NOT REGISTER SOME CONCERN OVER RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN TWO IMPORTANT REGIONS. I WAS DISAPPOINTED TO LEARN THAT MINISTER GROMYKO FEELS THAT THE RECENT PEACE INITIATIVES BY PRESIDENT SADAT AND PRIME MINISTER BEGIN WERE SOMEHOW CONTRIVED BY THE UNITED STATES, IN PART IN ORDER TO MOVE AWAY FROM THE PRINCIPLES TO WHICH HE JOINTLY SUBSCRIBED EARLIER IN THE YEAR. AS SECRETARY VANCE HAS ALREADY STATED, THESE EVENTS WERE NOT INITIATED BY THE UNITED STATES; NONETHELESS, WE DO WELCOME THEM AS POTENTIALLY POSITIVE STEPS TOWARD PEACE, AND WE HOPE THAT BOTH THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION CAN CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE ALL OF THE PARTIES TO REACH A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT. SUCH A SETTLEMENT WILL HAVE TO BE NEGOTIATED FINALLY AT GENEVA, AND WE COUNT ON COLLABORATING CLOSELY WITH YOU IN MAKING THESE NEGOTIATIONS AS FRUITFUL AS POSSIBLE. IN OUR VIEW, PRESENT TRENDS IN THE MIDDLE EAST DO INVOLVE AN INCREASING WILLINGNESS ON THE PART OF THE PARTIES CONCERNED TO ADOPT POSITIONS WHICH MAKE A COMPROMISE SOLUTION MORE LIKELY. WE WOULD HOPE THAT THE SOVIET UNION WOULD BE PARTY TO THAT PROCESS AND WOULD HELP TO DISCOURAGE THE EXTREMIST POSITIONS OF SOME OF THE ARAB PARTIES. WITHOUT SUCH SOVIET HELP, IT MIGHT PROVE DIFFICULT TO REACH THE COMMON GOALS OF A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT NEGOTIATED IN GENEVA, AS EMPHASIZED IN YOUR LETTER OF DECEMBER 16.

ALSO IN YOUR LETTER, YOU MAKE THE POINT THAT THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE IS A NECESSARY ELEMENT IN THE GENEVA CONFERENCE, WITH WHICH I AGREE, BUT I CONFESS TO A SENSE OF DISAPPOINTMENT THAT THE LEADERSHIP OF THE PLO HAS NOT BEEN MORE HELPFUL TO OUR EFFORTS TO WORK OUT A FORMULA FOR PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION AT THE CONFERENCE ACCEPTABLE TO THE PARTIES.

IN RESPONSE TO THE QUESTIONS YOU RAISE ABOUT THE PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED AT THE GENEVA CONFERENCE, I AM INCLINED TO FEEL THAT THESE MATTERS CAN BEST BE SETTLED IN CONSULTATIONS WITH THE PARTIES TO THE CONFERENCE. I UNDERSTAND YOUR CONCERNS, AND I AM CONFIDENT THAT THESE MATTERS CAN BE SATISFACTORILY RESOLVED WHEN THE CONFERENCE IS RECONVENED.

DURING THE PAST SEVERAL DAYS, I HAVE HAD CONVERSATIONS WITH PRIME MINISTER BEGIN AND BY TELEPHONE AND CABLE WITH PRESIDENT SADAT. I CONTINUE TO FIND BOTH OF THEM COMMITTED TO A COMPREHENSIVE PEACE, AND I HAVE STRESSED THAT THIS IS OUR GOAL AS WELL. WHILE PRIME MINISTER BEGIN HAS DEVELOPED TENTATIVE PROPOSALS ON THE SINAI AND THE WEST BANK AND GAZA, I HAVE NOT ENDORSED THESE PROPOSALS BUT

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HAVE MADE CLEAR THAT THE ULTIMATE JUDGMENT ON THEIR ACCEPTABILITY MUST BE MADE BY THOSE WHO WILL SIGN THE PEACE TREATIES. IT IS MY BELIEF, HOWEVER, THAT THEY IN NO WAY PRECLUDE MOVING NEGOTIATIONS AT AN APPROPRIATE TIME TO A BROADER FORUM OR DISCUSSING OTHER FRONTS.

I WOULD ALSO HOPE THAT THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION COULD COLLABORATE IN MAKING CERTAIN THAT REGIONAL AFRICAN DISPUTES DO NOT ESCALATE INTO MAJOR INTERNATIONAL CONFLICTS. THE FIGHTING THAT HAS DEVELOPED BETWEEN ETHIOPIA AND SOMALIA IS A REGRETTABLE DEVELOPMENT, ONE WHICH SHOULD BE CONTAINED AND TERMINATED BEFORE IT SPREADS FURTHER. WE ARE ENCOURAGING THE PARTIES TO ACCEPT MEDIATION, WE ARE REFRAINING FROM THE EXPORT OF ARMS TO ANY OF THE PARTIES INVOLVED IN THIS STRUGGLE, AND WE ARE URGING THE OTHER AFRICAN STATES TO TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THE EARLY RESOLUTION OF

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