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*Very urgent  
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NODIS  
CHEROKEE

E.O. 112065 GDS 12/12/84 (VEST, GEORGE S.)

TAGS: PARM, PDIP, UR, OVIP (HARRIMAN, W, AVERELL)

SUBJECT: HARRIMAN MEETING WITH BREZHNEV

FOR THE PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY VANCE FROM AVERELL HARRIMAN

1. I WAS CALLED TO SOVIET PRESIDENT BREZHNEV'S OFFICE AT 11:00 A.M. ON DECEMBER 6 AND MET WITH HIM FOR AN HOUR AND A HALF. BREZHNEV WAS ACCOMPANIED BY ALEKSANDROV-AGENTOV AND I BY MY ASSISTANT, PETER SKIERS. VIKTOR SUKHODREV INTERPRETED. AFTER A SHORT EXCHANGE OF AMENITIES, BREZHNEV INITIATED THE DISCUSSION BY READING FROM PREVIOUSLY PREPARED NOTES, ALTHOUGH HE AD-LIBBED WITHOUT DIFFICULTY THROUGHOUT THE CONVERSATION. THE

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MAIN ELEMENTS OF OUR TALK WERE (A) A SERIES OF SOVIET COMPLAINTS OVER NEGATIVE ATTITUDES IN U.S. TO IMPROVEMENT OF RELATIONS; (B) SOVIET WILLINGNESS TO CONTINUE A DIALOGUE, AND (C) NEED FOR GREATER SOVIET FLEXIBILITY ON SALT WHEN VANCE MEETS WITH GROMYKO. BREZHNEV FIRMLY ASSERTED THE LIMITS OF THE SOVIET MILITARY CAPABILITY IN CENTRAL EUROPE.

2. BREZHNEV OPENED THAT HE WAS PLEASED TO MEET ME AGAIN AND WANTED TO SAY THAT THE SOVIETS VERY CLOSELY FOLLOWED MY ACTIVITIES, CONSIDERING ME A CONSISTENT ADVOCATE OF IMPROVEMENT IN U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS. HE SAID THAT THE SOVIETS VALUE THE FACT THAT I LEND MY KNOWLEDGE AND PRESTIGE TO THAT OBJECTIVE; THIS IS WHY BREZHNEV WANTED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS MEETING TO DISCUSS WITH ME THE CURRENT STATE OF US-SOVIET AFFAIRS.

3. BREZHNEV COMPLAINED THAT AT TIMES IT WAS DIFFICULT FOR THE SOVIETS TO UNDERSTAND WHAT THE PRESENT US LEADERSHIP REALLY DESIRES. HE MAINTAINED THAT THE SOVIETS ARE NOT SEEKING MILITARY SUPERIORITY OVER THE US, OR ADVANTAGES OVER THE US IN ANY LOCATION. EVEN IN CENTRAL EUROPE, THE SOVIET UNION HAS NOT RECENTLY INCREASED FORCES BY A SINGLE MAN OR TANK. THE US HAD, AND

THERE IS INCESSANT GROWTH OF THE US MILITARY BUDGET, AND OF NEW WEAPONS SYSTEMS. HE ARGUED THAT NOW WHEN THE US NO LONGER HAS OVERALL NUCLEAR PREPONDERANCE, ATTEMPTS ARE MADE BY CERTAIN "HIGHLY INFLUENTIAL CIRCLES" IN THE US TO OBTAIN UNILATERAL ADVANTAGES WHICH ARE AN OBSTACLE TO A SALT AGREEMENT. BREZHNEV WARNED THAT IF THERE IS REALLY HOPE ON THE US SIDE TO OBTAIN MILITARY SUPERIORITY, IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE

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TO ACHIEVE IN MODERN TIMES WHEN SOVIET TECHNOLOGICAL LEVELS ARE SO HIGH AND GIVEN SOVIET RESOURCES. HE THEN WENT ON THAT THE CONTINUATION OF THE ARMS RACE WILL AFFORD NO ONE GREATER SECURITY AND WILL BE AT THE EXPENSE OF THE VITAL NEEDS OF ALL PEOPLES.

4. AT THIS POINT, BREZHNEV LEFT HIS NOTES. HE SAID THAT AS REGARDS THE ACCUSATIONS CONCERNING SOVIET ACTIONS IN AFRICA, ASIA, AND GOD KNOWS WHERE ELSE, THEY ARE WITHOUT FOUNDATION. HE COULD GIVE ONE RECENT EXAMPLE. WHEN HE ARRIVED FOR A GOVERNMENT MEETING, KOSYGIN ASKED HIM IF HE HAD HEARD OF THE FUSS ABOUT THE SHAH. WHEN BREZHNEV SAID THAT HE HAD NOT, KOSYGIN TOLD HIM THE RADIO IS FULL OF IT. THUS, SAID BREZHNEV, THAT WAS THE HAND OF MOSCOW IN THE IRANIAN SITUATION. BREZHNEV CONTINUED THAT US SUPPORT OF THE SHAH IS UNDERSTANDABLE, BUT WHEN RUMORS THAT US FORCES WERE BEING CONSIDERED FOR IRAN REACHES THE SOVIETS, THEY MUST BE CONCERNED FOR THEIR OWN SECURITY. BREZHNEV THEN RETURNED TO HIS NOTES AND READ THAT OF COURSE WHEN FRIENDLY GOVERNMENTS APPROACHED THE SOVIET UNION FOR ASSISTANCE TO WARD OFF AGGRESSION, THE SOVIET UNION RENDERED IT WITHIN REASONABLE LIMITS AND MAKES NO SECRET OF ITS ASSISTANCE. HE MAINTAINED THAT IN AIDING A JUST CAUSE THE SOVIET UNION SAW FAR LESS SIN THAN IN AMERICAN AID TO REGIMES WHICH OPPRESS THE MASSES, SUCH AS IN CHILE, NICARAGUA, OR IRAN -- A SOVIET NEIGHBOR.

5. BREZHNEV THEN SAID HE HAD HEARD WASHINGTON WAS INTERESTED IN EXPANDING TRADE; YET, IN PRACTICE, THE SITUATION REMAINS "UNNORMALIZED." AS A RESULT, STAGNATION HAS SET IN OVER THE LAST THREE YEARS IN ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND OTHER FIELDS AND AT TIMES HAS BEEN REPLACED BY A "DEPRESSION" WHICH REDUCES THE POSSIBILITY OF UNDERSTANDING AND PROGRESS. AS REGARDS

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SOVIET POLICY TOWARDS THE US, HE SAID HE WISHED TO REPEAT, THIS POLICY REMAINS CONSISTENT AND NOT PRONE TO MOMENTARY CONSIDERATIONS. HE WENT ON THAT SOVIET POLICY CANNOT FALL VICTIM TO RECENT NEGATIVE OCCURRENCES. THE SOVIETS WERE PREPARED TO WORK ON PROBLEMS IN A CONSTRUCTIVE FASHION. THEY SAW THIS AS POSSIBLE BOTH NOW AND IN THE FUTURE. HE ASKED THAT I CONVEY THIS STATEMENT AND HIS PREVIOUS REMARKS TO PRESIDENT CARTER.

6. BREZHNEV THEN SAID HE WOULD CERTAINLY LIKE TO MEET AND WOULD BE WELL PREPARED TO MEET WITH PRESIDENT CARTER WHEN THE SALT "ELABORATION" IS COMPLETED. SUCH A MEETING SHOULD REFLECT REAL ACHIEVEMENTS AND COULD BE PRODUCTIVE IN OTHER AREAS.

7. I BEGAN BY SAYING THAT I WAS MOST GRATEFUL THAT PRESIDENT BREZHNEV HAD RECEIVED ME SO CORDIALLY. I NOTED THAT HE WAS ALWAYS FRANK WITH ME AND THAT THIS MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR ME TO BE FRANK AS WELL. I SAID THAT I HAD TALKED WITH PRESIDENT CARTER AND WITH SECRETARY VANCE BEFORE LEAVING FOR THE SOVIET UNION. THE PRESIDENT WANTS A SALT AGREEMENT AS SOON AS PRACTICABLE ON THE BASIS OF "ROUGH EQUIVALENCE." I SAID THAT I BELIEVED THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE -- OUR POLLS INDICATE 60-70 PERCENT -- WOULD SUPPORT A SALT AGREEMENT. (BREZHNEV HERE INTERJECTED THAT HE CERTAINLY DID NOT THINK THERE IS ANYONE WHO WANTS TO DIE FROM ATOM BOMBS.) I WENT ON THAT THERE ARE TROUBLEMAKERS INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE CONGRESS. THEIR OPPOSITION TO SALT IS NOW THE LOUDEST. THIS IS BECAUSE UNTIL WE HAVE AN AGREEMENT, WE SIMPLY DO NOT HAVE ANYTHING TO TALK ABOUT. I SAID THAT I BELIEVED THAT OUR TWO COUNTRIES HAVE A

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GREAT ASSET IN THE MUTUAL CONFIDENCE AND MUTUAL RESPECT WHICH HAS DEVELOPED BETWEEN FOREIGN MINISTER GROMYKO AND SECRETARY VANCE. BREZHNEV THEN COMMENTED THAT HE SAW SECRETARY VANCE AS A MAN WHO IS SEEKING THE ACHIEVEMENT OF AN AGREEMENT. HE ALSO EMPHASIZED THE GOOD IMPRESSION MADE ON HIM RECENTLY BY SENATOR RIBICOFF AND THE OTHER SENATORS ACCOMPANYING HIM TO THE SOVIET UNION.

8. I CONTINUED THAT WE WERE VERY CLOSE TO AN AGREEMENT ON SALT BUT THERE WERE SOME STICKY ITEMS ON WHICH PRESIDENT CARTER NEEDS COOPERATION FROM THE SOVIETS IF HE IS TO OBTAIN SENATE SUPPORT FOR A SALT AGREEMENT. I THEREFORE HOPED THAT PRESIDENT BREZHNEV WOULD GIVE PRESIDENT CARTER THE NECESSARY HELP. THERE WAS THEN A SHORT INAUDIBLE EXCHANGE BETWEEN ALEKSANDROV AND BREZHNEV; THEN BREZHNEV ASKED ME HOW HE SHOULD HELP. I RESPONDED THAT HE SHOULD AS FAR AS POSSIBLE ACCEPT THE US POSITION ON THE REMAINING ISSUES. THE OVERKILL ON BOTH SIDES WAS SO GREAT THAT THESE WERE REALLY SMALL MATTERS, BUT IMPORTANT IN PRESENTING SALT IN THE US. I WENT ON THAT PRESIDENT CARTER AND SECRETARY VANCE HOPED THERE COULD BE ANOTHER VANCE-GROMYKO MEETING SOON TO SETTLE MATTERS, AS SO MUCH TIME HAS ALREADY BEEN SPENT ON THEM. HERE AGAIN BREZHNEV AND ALEKSANDROV HAD AN EXCHANGE. BREZHNEV ASKED HIM WHEN

THE SECRETARY AND GROMYKO WOULD MEET AGAIN. WHEN ALEKSANDROV RESPONDED TOWARDS THE END OF DECEMBER, BREZHNEV ANSWERED THAT PERHAPS THEY COULD DO SOMETHING. SUKHODREV TRANSLATED THIS EXCHANGE.

9. I THEN WENT ON THAT THE SECRETARIES MIGHT ALSO BE ABLE TO AGREE ON A DATE AND PLACE FOR BREZHNEV'S MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT. BREZHNEV RESPONDED THAT

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FRANKLY THE TREATY WAS THE IMPORTANT THING. NATURALLY, HE AS A SOVIET, WOULD SAY MOSCOW, BUT WOULD BE AGREEABLE TO GENEVA OR WASHINGTON AS WELL. I RESPONDED THAT I THOUGHT THE LOCATION HAD TO BE IN THE US SINCE IT WAS NOW BREZHNEV'S TURN TO TRAVEL.

10. BREZHNEV THEN STATED WITH EMOTION THAT HE WAS PREPARED TO WORK THE REST OF HIS LIFE THAT THERE BE NO NUCLEAR WAR, AND THAT THERE BE NO WAR BETWEEN THE US AND THE SOVIET UNION. HE ADDED SOMEWHAT TESTILY THAT EVEN IF THE UNITED STATES MIGHT SAY ONE THING TODAY AND SOMETHING ELSE TOMORROW, HE WOULD REMAIN RELAXED AND BALANCED. I NOTED THAT WHENEVER I MADE A SPEECH, I ALWAYS SAY THAT I BELIEVE THERE ARE NO LEADERS WHO DESIRE TO WORK TO AVOID THE POSSIBILITY OF NUCLEAR WAR MORE THAN PRESIDENT BREZHNEV. I FELT I COULD SAY THAT SINCERELY. TEARS CAME TO BREZHNEV'S EYES AT THIS POINT AND HE THANKED ME, SAYING THAT WAS INDEED SO.

11. I THEN ADDED I FULLY AGREED THAT THE MEETING BETWEEN PRESIDENTS CARTER AND BREZHNEV SHOULD BE WELL PREPARED. THERE SHOULD BE AMPLE ROOM FOR AGREEMENTS WITH THE SOVIET UNION WHICH WOULD HELP SOLIDIFY OUR RELATIONS, INCLUDING ON TRADE AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENERGY. I ADDED THAT I HAD COME TO THE MEETINGS THIS WEEK IN MOSCOW WITH SECRETARIES BLUMENTHAL AND KREPS IN ORDER TO HELP IMPROVE TRADE RELATIONS. THERE WERE 400 AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN IN MOSCOW AND THERE WAS GREAT HOPE FOR PROGRESS OVER THE NEXT TWO DAYS, BUT MORE OF THE PROBLEMS WHICH WE HAVE ON TRADE COULD BE SMOOTHED OUT IN THE MEETING BETWEEN THE TWO PRESIDENTS (HERE BREZHNEV MADE AN INAUDIBLE COMMENT TO ALEKSANDROV

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WHO ANSWERED, "ACTIVELY.")

12. CONCERNING THE LAST POINT WHICH BREZHNEV HAD RAISED, I SAID THE UNITED STATES IS WORKING TO ELIMINATE TYRANNY IN NICARAGUA AND HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THE SITUATION IN CHILE (HERE ALEKSANDROV INTERJECTED IN ENGLISH "NEVERTHELESS THE AUTHORITIES ARE HELPED.)

I CONTINUED THAT I DID NOT SEE ANY POSSIBILITY OF SENDING AMERICAN TROOPS TO IRAN; WE WERE, OF COURSE, OFFERING POLITICAL SUPPORT TO THE SHAH. I SAID I WAS GLAD TO HEAR FROM THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT THAT THEY WOULD NOT BE SENDING TROOPS EITHER. BREZHNEV RESPONDED THAT I WAS CORRECT (CONCERNING NOT SENDING SOVIET TROOPS TO IRAN). HE SAID THE SOVIETS HAD NOT MADE A SECRET OF THEIR ATTITUDE TO THE POSSIBILITY OF AN AMERICAN MILITARY INVOLVEMENT. IT WAS ALREADY OF CONCERN TO THE SOVIETS THAT THERE WERE TENS OF THOUSANDS OF AMERICAN EXPERTS IN IRAN, MILITARY AS WELL AS CIVILIAN. HE WANTED TO MAKE CLEAR THAT HIS STATEMENT WAS NOT A REPROACH, BUT THERE HAD BEEN TALK OF SENDING AMERICAN TROOPS, NOTABLY IN THE PRESS.

13. I THEN SAID THERE WAS ONE AREA WHERE I MYSELF HAD DIFFICULTY EXPLAINING SOVIET INTENTIONS: THE INCREASE IN SIZE AND THE QUALITY OF SOVIET AND OTHER WARSAW PACT FORCES IN CENTRAL EUROPE. BREZHNEV QUICKLY RESPONDED THAT HE FELT WE WERE GETTING OUTSIDE OF THE SCOPE OF THIS MEETING. HE NOTED THAT THERE WERE DELEGATIONS TALKING ABOUT THESE ISSUES IN VIENNA AND THAT THE SOVIETS HAD FURNISHED DATA TO THEM. HE FELT THERE WAS NO NEED TO REPEAT THIS QUESTION TO ME. I RESPONDED THAT I ONLY WISHED TO SAY THAT THE INFORMATION PRESENTLY AVAILABLE TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WAS DIFFERENT. I FELT THE FACTS MUST BE BROUGHT TO THEM.

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14. I THEN NOTED THAT I WOULD BE MAKING A SPEECH AT THE TRADE AND ECONOMIC COUNCIL LUNCHEON FOLLOWING MY MEETING WITH PRESIDENT BREZHNEV. I WOULD BE SPEAKING OF PRESIDENT BREZHNEV AND OF SOVIET-AMERICAN COLLABORATION DURING THE WAR, INCLUDING DEALINGS WITH STALIN. I WOULD CONCLUDE WITH A CALL FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF TRADE AND OUR RELATIONS IN THE FUTURE. BREZHNEV COMMENTED THAT HE WOULD CERTAINLY LIKE MY SPEECH IF I WOULD BE PRAISING HIM. HE SAID, IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION, THAT HE WOULD OF COURSE NOT MIND MY MENTIONING STALIN.

15. BREZHNEV THEN CAME AROUND AND HUGGED ME RUSSIAN STYLE, MORE WARMLY THAN ON PREVIOUS VISITS. I LEFT MAKING THE COMMENT THAT I WAS SINCERELY HOPING FOR A SALT AGREEMENT AND WAS CERTAIN THAT HE AND PRESIDENT CARTER WOULD FIND COMMON GROUND WHEN THEY MET.

CHRISTOPHER

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