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GP INNEO

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FM MOSCOW

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TO THE WHITE HOUSE

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FROM AMBASSADOR TOWN, MOSCOW 651
TO: IMMEDIATE WHITE HOUSE.
FOR DR. ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI.
SUBJECT: BREZHNEV LETTER; BREZHNEV'S HEALTH, GROMYKO ON
MIDDLE EAST

1. UPON RECEIPT OF YOUR MESSAGE, WE INQUIRED THROUGH FOREIGN
MINISTRY WHETHER BREZHNEV WOULD BE AVAILABLE FOR DELIVERY OF LETTER
IN NEAR FUTURE. AFTER CHECKING, MINISTRY INFORMED US THAT BREZHNEV
WOULD NOT BE AVAILABLE "TODAY OR FOR NEXT FEW DAYS," WHEREUPON WE
REQUESTED MEETING WITH GROMYKO. LATTER AGREED TO RECEIVE ME AT
12:40 PM DECEMBER 22.

2. BREZHNEV'S HEALTH. AFTER GROMYKO SCANNED A COPY OF THE
LETTER, HE NOTED THAT MANY QUESTIONS WERE TOUCHED UPON AND THAT OF
COURSE HE WOULD REPORT FULLY TO THE GENERAL SECRETARY. GROMYKO
ADDED THAT BREZHNEV HAD "CAUGHT A SMALL COLO" AND THEN FLU BUT WAS
ALREADY FEELING BETTER. BREZHNEV'S DOCTORS HAD RECOMMENDED THAT HE
AVOID FORMAL OR LARGE MEETINGS FOR SEVERAL DAYS, BUT "ALL IS IN
ORDER." I SAID I WAS SURE PRESIDENT CARTER WOULD BE PLEASED TO HEAR
THAT MR. BREZHNEV'S INDISPOSITION WAS NOT SERIOUS.

3. GROMYKO ON THE MIDDLE EAST. GROMYKO SAID HE WOULD LIKE TO
COMMENT ON THE MIDDLE EAST SITUATION, QUITE INDEPENDENTLY OF THE
PRESIDENT'S LETTER. HE HAD RECEIVED A REPORT FROM THE SOVIET EMBASSY
IN WASHINGTON OF SECRETARY VANCE'S RECENT CONVERSATION WITH DOBRYNIN
ON THIS TOPIC, AND IN THAT CONTEXT WISHED TO STATE THE FOLLOWING:

-- THE SOVIET UNION IS NOT ACCUSTOMED TO ACCEPTING OR
APPROVING AGREEMENTS CONCLUDED WITHOUT THE PARTICIPATION OF THE
SOVIET UNION; THIS IS NOT OUR WAY OF CONDUCTING BUSINESS, AND WE
DON'T LIKE THIS PRACTISE;

-- PERHAPS IT IS DIFFERENT WITH THE US, AND PERHAPS YOU THINK
THAT IF AGREEMENT IS REACHED BETWEEN ISRAEL AND EGYPT THE USSR WILL
BECOME A PARTY TO SUCH AGREEMENT; BUT THIS IS NOT OUR PRACTICE.

4. WHEN I ASKED IF THE SOVIET UNION WOULD STAND ASIDE EVEN IF
IT APPROVED THE CONTENTS OF A POSSIBLE AGREEMENT, GROMYKO RESPONDED
WITH SOME FEELINGS:

-- WE ALREADY KNOW WHAT ISRAEL AND EGYPT THINK; IT IS HARD TO

***** HSR COMMENT *****

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Per: Rac Project

ESDN; NLC-7-7-2-43-8

BY: NARA, DATE 8/9/13

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KEEP SECRETS WHEN SO MANY GOVERNMENTS ARE INVOLVED;

-- THE POINT IS THAT THE GENERAL LINE TAKEN BY SADAT AND BEGIN IS A LINE OF DISAGREEMENT, NOT AGREEMENT; YOU SEEM TO LIKE THIS, WE DON'T;

-- THE USSR AND THE US FOUND AGREEMENT, AS EXPRESSED IN OUR JOINT STATEMENT, AND GENEVA SEEMED TO BE A REALITY;

-- THEN THE ISRAELIS CONCECTED A STRANGE POSITION REGARDING REPRESENTATION AT GENEVA, INDEED HISTORY PROBABLY HAS NEVER KNOWN SUCH A POSITION; THE ARABS PROPOSE A DELEGATION, AND THE ISRAELIS DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT IT IS ACCEPTABLE;

-- SECRETARY VANCE EMPHASIZED THAT GENEVA WAS NOT LOST, BUT IF SO, WHY ALL OF THIS CURRENT BUSINESS? IT IS "ALREADY DOUBTFUL" THAT ISRAEL WANTS PEACE; IT COULD BE THAT THEY WANT ANOTHER WAR.

5. AT THIS POINT I ASKED IF GROMYKO REALLY BELIEVED THAT, NOTING THAT ALL EVIDENCE AT OUR DISPOSAL INDICATES A GENUINE ISRAELI DESIRE FOR PEACE AND THAT MY PERSONAL EXPERIENCE AS AMBASSADOR THERE LEAVES NO DOUBT ABOUT THIS. I SAID I COULD NOT ADD TO THE SUBSTANCE OF THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER OR SECRETARY VANCE'S REMARKS TO DOBRYNIN, BUT I COULD ASSURE GROMYKO ON THIS POINT.

6. GROMYKO COULD NOT BE DETERRED, AND PRESSED ON AS FOLLOWS:

-- MR. HARRIS, DURING HIS RECENT VISIT HERE, TALKED ABOUT HOW TO GET OUT OF THE CURRENT SITUATION; BUT HE NOW SEE GREAT AMOUNTS OF UNHELPFUL PROPAGANDA IN YOUR PRESS AND THAT OF ISRAEL;

-- NO THOUGHTFUL PERSON CAN DOUBT THAT THE ISRAELIS ARE IN EFFECT PLAYING DANGEROUS GAMES; THEY BRAVELY SAY THEY NEED NO GUARANTEES, AND SEEM TO THINK AS IN THE 18TH CENTURY THEY CAN GAIN SECURITY BY ESTABLISHING MILITARY POINTS HERE AND THERE; THIS IS A CHILD'S GAME, AND ONE IS AT A LOSS TO UNDERSTAND WHY THEY MAKE SUCH STATEMENTS, BUT THEY DO;

-- SUCH POSITIONS ARE FALLACIOUS AND MISTAKEN; THERE CAN BE NO MORE CONSTRUCTIVE POSITION THAN THAT TAKEN BY THE SOVIET UNION; WE WANT NOTHING MORE THAN PEACEFUL RELATIONS BETWEEN ALL GOVERNMENTS, AND OUR POSITION IS WELL KNOWN;

-- THE SOVIET UNION HAS MADE CLEAR ITS POSITION ABOUT THE EXISTENCE OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL, BUT EXTREMIST VOICES ARE FEEDING ON THE CURRENT ISRAELI POSITION, AND THAT WHICH HAS BEEN ATTAINED (I.E., PROGRESS TOWARD A MEANINGFUL GENEVA CONFERENCE) IS NOW BEING LOST.

7. GROMYKO REPEATED THAT HE MADE THE ABOVE REMARKS IN RESPONSE TO THE SECRETARY'S CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR DOBRYNIN. GENERAL SECRETARY OF COURSE MAY WISH TO EXPRESS HIS VIEWS IN RESPONSE TO THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER.

8. I CONCLUDED THIS PORTION OF THE 30-MINUTE MEETING BY UNDERTAKING TO RELAY GROMYKO'S TO WASHINGTON, AND BY REITERATING THAT WE WERE GLAD TO HEAR THAT MR. BREZHNEV WAS RECOVERING FROM THE FLU. (I THEN TOOK THE OCCASION TO PRESENT GROMYKO WITH AN UPDATED "REPRESENTATION LIST" OF FAMILY REUNIFICATION CASES, ON WHICH I WILL REPORT BY SEPARATE MESSAGE).

9. GROMYKO ADDED THAT HE WISHED TO PASS ALONG NEW YEAR'S

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GREETINGS TO THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY, "EVEN IF THERE MIGHT
BE SOME DISHARMONIOUS ASPECTS" IN OUR RESPECTIVE OFFICIAL POSITIONS
AT THE MOMENT.
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