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TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 934 OF 26 SEPTEMBER

INFO IMMEDIATE PEKING, HONG KONG.

Polcol Dept.

FOLLOWING FROM PRIVATE SECRETARY

No. 10.

SECRETARY OF STATE'S MEETING WITH CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTER

Palace.

SUMMARY

Europa.

1. WARM EXCHANGES ABOUT SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME OF HONG KONG NEGOTIATIONS. WU GAVE ACCOUNT OF HIS DISCUSSION WITH GROMYKO: NO PROGRESS REGISTERED IN IMPROVING SINO/SOVIET RELATIONS.

cc 27/9.

DETAIL

2. AFTER AN EXCHANGE OF CONGRATULATIONS ABOUT THE SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME OF THE NEGOTIATIONS, WU SAID THAT HE HAD MUCH APPRECIATED THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S COMMENT AT HIS PRESS CONFERENCE THIS MORNING TO THE EFFECT THAT THE AGREEMENT WAS BASED ON MUTUAL TRUST AND NOT ON EXTERNAL GUARANTEES.

3. THE SECRETARY OF STATE REFERRED TO THE ENCOURAGING REACTIONS FROM OTHER COUNTRIES. THIS WOULD HELP TO GENERATE CONFIDENCE IN HONG KONG'S FUTURE. HE GAVE WU A COPY OF THE WHITE PAPER, ADDING THAT THE GOVERNOR WOULD BE SPEAKING IN HONG KONG TOMORROW AND WOULD AGAIN COMMEND THE AGREEMENT TO THE PEOPLE THERE. HE THEN RAISED THE QUESTION OF PUBLIC STATEMENTS. IT WOULD BE MOST IMPORTANT IN THE WEEKS BEFORE THE DEBATE IN PARLIAMENT TO GIVE THE MAXIMUM REASSURANCE TO THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG. THIS WOULD BE A SENSITIVE PERIOD. THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WOULD CERTAINLY BE DOING ALL THEY COULD TO GET TO ENCOURAGE A FAVOURABLE RESPONSE FROM HONG KONG.

4. THE SECRETARY OF STATE THOUGHT THAT THE PRIME MINISTER MIGHT WISH TO GO TO PEKING TO SIGN THE AGREEMENT, ALTHOUGH NO (NO) DECISION HAD YET BEEN TAKEN. WU SAID THAT THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT MUCH APPRECIATED THE CONSTRUCTIVE APPROACH OF THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE SECRETARY OF STATE THROUGHOUT THE NEGOTIATIONS. HE AGREED WITH THE SECRETARY OF STATE THAT WE SHOULD NOW LOOK FORWARD TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF RELATIONS BETWEEN BRITAIN AND CHINA ON A NEW BASIS.

5. WU THEN GAVE AN ACCOUNT OF HIS SIX HOURS OF TALKS HERE WITH GROMYKO. THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE MEETINGS HAD BEEN CALM, BUT THERE HAD BEEN NO SUBSTANTIVE PROGRESS. THEY HAD RANGED OVER DISARMAMENT, REGIONAL ISSUES AND BILATERAL RELATIONS.

6. THIS HAD BEEN THE FIRST SINO/SOVIET MEETING AT FOREIGN MINISTER LEVEL FOR 20 OR MORE YEARS. BUT IT WAS CLEAR THAT SOVIET VIEWS HAD NOT CHANGED. THEIR APPROACH HAD BEEN RIGID, ALTHOUGH THEY HAD RECIPROCATED THE CHINESE WISH TO IMPROVE SINO/SOVIET RELATIONS.

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7. WU'S CONCLUSION WAS THAT IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION WOULD BE A LONG HAUL. BUT THE CHINESE WERE A PATIENT PEOPLE. THEY HAD HOPED TO PERSUADE THE RUSSIANS BY REASONED ARGUMENT, BUT THIS HAD NOT SO FAR MADE ANY IMPRESSION.
8. THE SECRETARY OF STATE SAID THAT THE SOVIET ATTITUDE HAD BEEN VERY SIMILAR DURING HIS VISIT TO MOSCOW. HE AND MANY OTHER WESTERN MINISTERS HAD TRIED TO CONVINCE THE RUSSIANS ABOUT THE SINCERITY OF THE WEST'S APPROACH TO ARMS CONTROL: APPARENTLY WITHOUT SUCCESS. HE AGREED THAT IN DEALING WITH THE RUSSIANS PATIENCE WAS ESSENTIAL.
9. THE SECRETARY OF STATE SAID THAT HE LOOKED FORWARD TO RECEIVING WU IN THE UK AT SOME STAGE. WE WERE OF COURSE LOOKING FORWARD TO THE CHINESE PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT NEXT YEAR. THE CHINESE INVITATION TO THE QUEEN TO VISIT CHINA WAS WELL ESTABLISHED IN THE PLANNING PROCESS. BUT THE QUEEN'S TRAVELS WERE ARRANGED LONG IN ADVANCE: IT WAS NOT (NOT) YET POSSIBLE TO KNOW WHEN A VISIT MIGHT BE ARRANGED.
10. FOLLOWING THE MEETING, WU READ OUT A SHORT STATEMENT TO THE PRESS BUT DID NOT ANSWER QUESTIONS. WE SHALL TRY TO OBTAIN A COPY OF HIS STATEMENT FROM THE CHINESE FOR THE RECORD.

THOMSON

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