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OCTOBER 3, 1984

DEAR MARGARET,

THANK YOU FOR YOUR WARM ENDORSEMENT OF OUR APPROACH TO EAST-WEST RELATIONS. AS PROMISED, I WANT TO SHARE WITH YOU SOME OF MY INITIAL THOUGHTS AND IMPRESSIONS FOLLOWING FOREIGN MINISTER GROMYKO'S VISIT TO THE U. S.

OUR ALMOST NINE HOURS OF DISCUSSION WITH MR. GROMYKO; FIRST IN NEW YORK AND THEN IN WASHINGTON, WERE AN EXTREMELY USEFUL EXPERIENCE. AS I HAD HOPED BEFOREHAND, IT PROVIDED ME WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO SET FORTH PERSONALLY AND CANDIDLY MY INTEREST IN A MORE STABLE AND PRODUCTIVE EAST-WEST DIALOGUE TO MR. GROMYKO AND THROUGH HIM, TO THE REST OF THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP. I SENSED THAT IN TURN, MR. GROMYKO AS WELL CONSIDERED THE PAST WEEK AN IMPORTANT OCCASION FOR A DIRECT EXPOSITION TO ME OF THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP'S OWN CONCERNS ABOUT THE CURRENT STATE OF EAST-WEST RELATIONS.

FROM THE BEGINNING, OUR IMMEDIATE EXPECTATIONS FOR THESE MEETINGS HAD BEEN MODEST AND REALISTIC. I DID NOT EXPECT MR. GROMYKO TO COME TO THE U. S. PREPARED TO SIGNAL ANY EARLY SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE IN SOVIET POLICY NOR DID HE DO SO. HE IS, AS YOU ARE WELL AWARE, A TOUGH AND ACCOMPLISHED INTERLOCUTOR AND MUCH OF OUR CONVERSATION TOGETHER SERVED TO UNDERSCORE THE MAJOR DIFFERENCES BETWEEN US. AT THE SAME TIME, HOWEVER, IT WAS ALSO CLEAR THAT HE CAME PREPARED TO LISTEN CAREFULLY TO WHAT WE HAD TO SAY. HIS TONE WAS SERIOUS, THOUGHTFUL, AND, AT TIMES, NOT UNCONSTRUCTIVE. HE HEARD OUT OUR IDEAS FOR APPROACHES BY WHICH U. S. -SOVIET RELATIONS MIGHT BE PUT ON A MORE POSITIVE BASIS, BUT WAS CAREFUL NEITHER TO BE SEEN AS AGREEING TO THEM NOR TO REJECT THEM OUT OF HAND.

MY DISCUSSIONS AND THOSE OF GEORGE SHULTZ WITH MR. GROMYKO COVERED THE FULL RANGE OF ARMS CONTROL, REGIONAL, BILATERAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES. THE SUBSTANCE OF MR. GROMYKO'S REMARKS ON BOTH OUR GENERAL RELATIONS AND ON SPECIFIC ISSUES SHOWED NOTHING TO SUGGEST ANY IMPENDING BREAKTHROUGH. IF ANYTHING, THEY SERVED TO CONFIRM THE WISDOM OF OUR PRESENT COURSE IN DEALING WITH THE SOVIET UNION ON A BASIS OF SOBER REALISM, FIRM RESOLVE, AND QUIET CONFIDENCE.

I AM PERSONALLY HOPEFUL THAT IN TIME, SOME OF THE IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR AN IMPROVEMENT IN OUR DIALOGUE THAT WE HAVE RAISED WITH MR. GROMYKO OVER THIS PAST WEEK WILL EVENTUALLY BE REALIZED. IN THE MEANTIME, HOWEVER, I AM PREPARED TO BE PATIENT UNTIL THAT TIME WHEN THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP IS BOTH ABLE AND WILLING TO RESPOND POSITIVELY TO OUR READINESS TO NEGOTIATE SERIOUSLY.

I WILL KEEP YOU INFORMED OF OUR FURTHER THOUGHTS ON THIS MATTER. AS ALWAYS, I WELCOME AND APPRECIATE YOUR SUPPORT AND COUNSEL.

SINCERELY,

RON

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NLS MD. 7-046 # 31701

BY MSJ NARA DATE 6/6/87