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DRAFT MINUTE TO [REDACTED]
FROM SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

Soviet Union: Concern about a Surprise NATO Attack

Before the meeting of Ministers on 4 April to discuss action which might be taken with the United States on the evidence of Soviet concern about recent NATO military exercises set out in JIC(84)(N)45, the Prime Minister may wish to see the [REDACTED]

2. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Its scenario, summarised in paragraph 15 of the report, shows the concern of the Soviet Union over a possible NATO surprise attack mounted under cover of exercises - [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] practice of NATO nuclear release procedures in Able Archer. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Able Archer-83, [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

3. All this contrasts with the Soviet response to Able Archer-83, analysed in the JIC Note. That response does not appear to have formed part of the Soviet exercise programme [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] it took place over a major Soviet holiday, it had the form of actual military activity and alerts, not just war-gaming, and it was limited geographically to the area, Central Europe, covered by the NATO exercise which the Soviet Union was monitoring.

4. I am sending a copy of this minute to the Private Secretaries of the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, the Defence Secretary, the Lord President and the Home Secretary.

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