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DRAFT

PS/Secretary of State

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DCDS ACDS(C)

AGDS(P) AUS(D Staff)

Head of DS12 Head of DS17 11/1/2

do

SOVIET UNION: CONCERN ABOUT A SUPPRISE NATO ATTACK

Thank you for your minute M014/10 of 27 March which sought advice on the line which the Secretary of State might take at the meeting which the Prime Minister has called on Wednesday, 4 April, to discuss JIC(84)(N)45.

2. Heightened Soviet concern about the possibility of a surprise NATO attack would of course be a very proper cause of concern for Western Governments. But it is I think necessary to consider the strength of the available evidence and the implications of possible NATO reactions carefully.

Soviet reactions to Exercise

ABLE ARCHER (an annual NATO command post exercise testing nuclear

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ABLE ARCHER				

4. In the view of the Defence Intelligence Staff there is certainly

Furthermore the report brings together which are not necessarily related. We have reflected this in JIC discussion, and the present report reflects a compromise

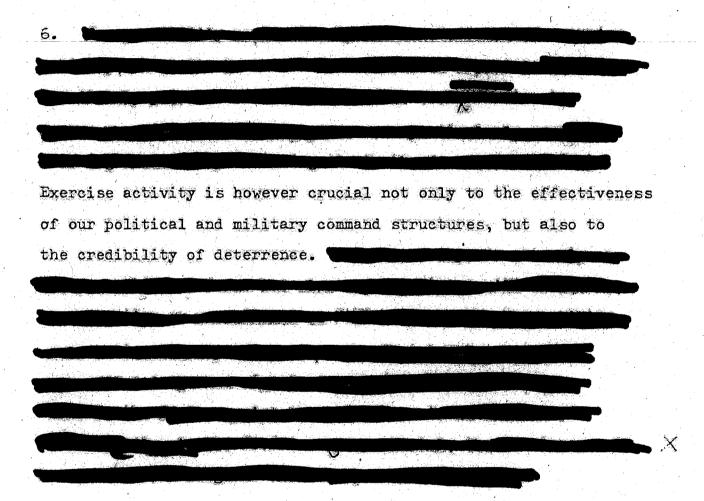
5. These reservations notwithstanding, we clearly need to guard against any possibility of Soviet misinterpretation, however slight the evidence. I would therefore wholly endorse the concluding sentence of the paper which proposes further

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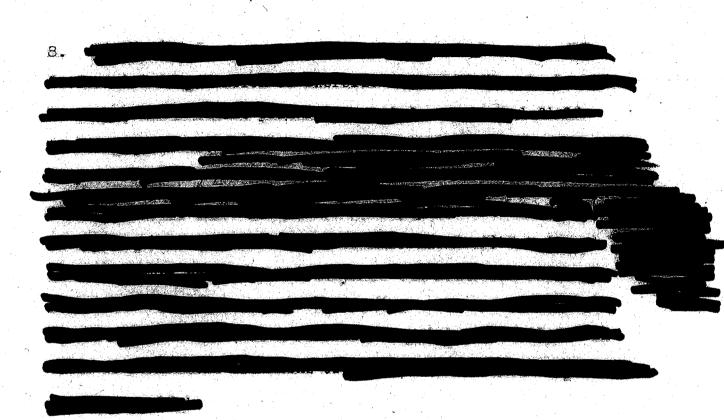
"close examination of the degree and scope of Warsaw Pact reactions to NATO nuclear exercises". The Prime Minister will however wish to consider whether any further steps need to be taken to allay possible Soviet concerns.



7. There is however one possibility that clearly merits discussion which might go some way to allaying possible Soviet concern, and which is compatible both with deterrence and with the Western position on confidence building measures, ie that NATO should inform the Soviet Union on a routine basis of proposed NATO exercise activity involving nuclear play.

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Such an approach would be wholly consistent with Western efforts in the CDE, and makes sense

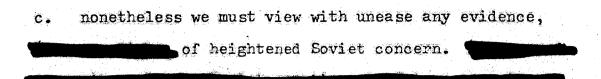


9. <u>Line to take</u> In discussion, Secretary of State may wish to make the following points:

а.

b. exercise activity is a vital element of deterrence;





the possibility that NATO should inform the Soviet Union on a routine basis of proposed NATO exercise activity involving nuclear play, as a useful confidence building measure.

DUS(P)

