

FM REYKJAVIK
TO PRIORITY FCO
TELNO 63
OF 151000Z APRIL 91
INFO R

SUMMARY

1. ICELANDIC FOREIGN MINISTER SUMMONS SOVIET AMBASSADOR TO HAND OVER PAPER ON ICELAND'S POSITION VIS A VIS THE BALTIC STATES AND RECOGNITION OF LITHUANIA. AMBASSADOR'S RESPONSE NEGATIVE. TIMING HAS MUCH TO DO WITH ELECTION CAMPAIGN. BUT BALTIC FOREIGN MINISTERS ACCEPT ICELAND'S MEDIATION OFFER.

DETAIL

2. JON BALDVIN HANNIBALSSON, FOREIGN MINISTER, SUMMONED IGOR KRASAVIN, THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR, ON 12 APRIL AND HANDED TO HIM A PAPER (COPY FOLLOWS BY BAG) EXPLAINING ICELAND'S POSITION REGARDING LITHUANIA AND THE OTHER BALTIC STATES. ICELAND'S AMBASSADOR TO MOSCOW HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED TO TAKE SIMILAR ACTION WITH THE SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTER. SVEINN BJORNSSON, POLITICAL DIRECTOR AT THE MFA, TOLD ME THAT KRASAVIN'S REACTION WAS PREDICTABLY NEGATIVE.

3. THE PURPOSE OF THE PAPER APPEARS TWOFOLD. FIRSTLY, TO JUSTIFY THE ICELANDIC GOVERNMENT'S CONTENTION THAT ITS RECOGNITION IN 1922 OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA REMAINS VALID. SECONDLY, TO REFUTE THE SOVIET CLAIM THAT ICELAND'S ACTIONS CONSTITUTE INTERFERENCE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF THE SOVIET UNION. IN THE FINAL SECTION OF THE PAPER (THERE ARE SIX) THE SOVIET CHARGE THAT ICELAND'S POLICIES ARE INCOMPATIBLE WITH HER OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE UN CHARTER OR THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT IS REJECTED. HOWEVER, IN A CLEAR EFFORT TO MOLLIFY THERE IS THE CURIOUS COMMENT THAT QUOTE IN MANY RESPECTS UNQUOTE ICELAND'S ACTIONS DO NOT RESULT FROM CURRENT POLICIES OR RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE SOVIET UNION BUT ARE QUOTE RATHER THE RESIDUAL LEGAL EFFECTS OF ACTIVITIES WHICH TOOK PLACE OVER 50 YEARS AGO. UNQUOTE THE PAPER ENDS WITH AN EXHORTATION TO THE BALTIC STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION TO SETTLE THEIR DISPUTE THROUGH NEGOTIATIONS, WITH A REMINDER THAT

ICELAND HAS AGREED TO MEDIATE.

COMMENT

4. HANNIBALSSON'S ACTIONS APPEAR TO BE CLOSELY CONNECTED WITH THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN, WHICH IS CURRENTLY IN FULL SWING.



5. BJORNSSON HAS ALSO TOLD ME ABOUT THE RESOLUTION AGREED OVER THE WEEKEND AT JURMALA BY BALTIC FOREIGN MINISTERS, TO ACCEPT ICELANDIC OFFERS OF MEDIATION. THIS HAS DELIGHTED HANNIBALSON AND WILL DOUBTLESS HELP TO KEEP HIM FROM DOING ANYTHING UNPREDICTABLE JUST BEFORE THE ELECTIONS.

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