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Prime Minister
C.D.P.

PRIME MINISTER

Arms Control: Briefing Meeting, Chequers, 2 February

The meeting begins at 1000 and concludes with lunch. A list of those attending is attached. This is intended as a Chairman's note.

The purposes of the meeting are:

- (i) to work out positions on the main arms control issues for your meeting with President Reagan;
- (ii) to define what concrete result we want from that meeting (there is a risk of anti-climax after the Four Points in December).
- (iii) to discuss the tactical handling.
- (iv) to commission any further work which may be needed.

You have seen the main papers (folder attached).

You might take the meeting through the main points one by one.

A. Strategic Defence Initiative (note D in Folder)

You had a thorough discussion with the President in December. There's not a great deal more to be said to him at this stage on the substance of the SDI. Indeed there is a risk that reiterating our concerns may just irritate him: and anyway the position for Geneva is satisfactorily held by the Four Points. For the same reason it would be better not to hand over our SDI paper to the Americans. (FCS may propose

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handing it over at official level: I'm not sure this is really any better.)

But there are three points which do need discussion on the SDI:

- (i) should we volunteer to participate in SDI-related research (or encourage British firms to do so)? An offer to do so could have considerable political impact, above all with the President: it might produce some useful technological spin-off: and it could give us more insight into and perhaps influence over the SDI. Against this, FCO and MOD may argue that such an offer would identify us publicly with the SDI, which they would see as a mistake in itself and likely to cause problems in the Alliance.
- (ii) what advice should we give the Americans on the tactical handling of the SDI issue in the Geneva talks? The negotiating machinery agreed in Geneva offers the Russians opportunities to make progress on START and INF hostage to satisfactory progress on space. What can we suggest to avoid the Americans being outmanoeuvred on this, leading to trouble with public opinion?
- (iii) how far should we press the Americans to winnow out restraints on ASATS from the general issue of space? Do we want to urge specific proposals on ASATS, e.g., a restriction to one low-level ASATS for each side? A ban on the development of high-level ASATS? A time-limited ban?

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B. START/INF.

The advice is that you should describe to the President an overall negotiating position on START/INF/space which we think the Americans would be well advised to adopt, and leave him with a paper on it (the paper at A).

In summary the proposals are:

- a mix of reductions in warheads and launchers for a possible framework START agreement
- a time limited ban on testing and deployment of ASATS
- recommitment to the ABM Treaty
- US/Soviet understanding of what is permissible on strategic defence systems
- review of the whole package after say 10 years.

The first point to look at is how far it is really wise to put a proposal to the Americans at all. Our priority should be to discover how the Americans believe that the Russians will play the game and how they intend to respond. We shall want to probe what proposals they have in mind to make. Our own suggestions would emerge from the discussions rather than be plonked down on the table as a ready-made package. The latter would irritate the Americans who will after all conduct the negotiations.

On the substance of the proposals, points which you might explore on Saturday are:

- (i) what do we expect the Soviet Union to offer?
(Gorbachev spoke of deep reductions).

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- (ii) are there particular points of direct interest to us on the warhead/launcher mix that we want to put to the Americans (apart from exclusion of third country forces)? Or should we leave it to the Americans to determine a 'safe' mix?
- (iii) in proposing recommitment to the ABM Treaty, how do we get over the problem of apparent Soviet breaches of it? Does it need amending or adding to?
- (iv) what advice should we give the Americans on the handling of the Allies?

C. Chemical Warfare

It is suggested (Annex B) that you raise the Article X (Challenge Inspection) issue with the President, on the basis of a paper (Annex E) given to the Americans in advance.

There is much to be said for raising the general problem of chemical weapons with the President, and the possible need for modernisation of the US arsenal.

But I suspect Challenge Inspection may be too detailed for the President and might better be discussed by the Foreign Secretary with Shultz.

D. Non-Proliferation

You are disinclined to nag the Americans on the Threshold Test Ban and the Peaceful Nuclear Explosions Treaties.

E. Tactical Handling

The main question is: what do we want to come out of the meeting with President Reagan? It will be hard to match the

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impact of the Four Points. But there will be expectations of something new. Candidates for inclusion in a statement would be:

- a confirmation of four points
- a UK offer to participate in SDI research
- a reaffirmation of the exclusion of third country systems
- agreed principles for the START/INF talks (probably too ambitious)
- but what else?

All this suggests that you will not need to devote the whole of your meeting with the President to arms control: and, in the tete-a-tete at least, might also deal with the dollar/the deficit, the Middle East and Central America.

F. Further Work

Depending on how Saturday's discussion goes, you might commission:

- a fuller speaking note on the main arms control issues designed less to propagate a UK position and more to probe US thinking, though with the aim of arriving at agreed conclusions.
- more thought about what we want to be in a position to say publicly after the meeting with President Reagan, which will preserve the unity of the Alliance.

31 January, 1985.

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The politics of it are that President Reagan is committed utterly to the concept of the SDI as the single most imaginative idea of his Presidency. Nothing is going to shake him.

But the concept is not going to be realized during the few years of his Presidency. And none of us know what would happen after that. A Democratic President? Another Carter? SDI might be abandoned.

The key is

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not to allow any irrevocable decisions affecting deployment of an SDI. Such would sabotage the short-term possibilities of limiting and reducing nuclear arms.

BRIEFING MEETING AT CHEQUERS ON ARMS CONTROL, 2 FEBRUARY 1985

Those attending will be:

Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary

Secretary of State for Defence

Mr. Luce

Mr. Stanley Whitmore

Sir Clive Whitmore

Sir Percy Cradock

Sir Michael Quinlan Staff

Chief of the Defence Staff

Mr. Bryan Cartledge

Professor Norman

Mr. Butler

Mr. Weston

Mr. Powell

TEXT OF PRIME MINISTER'S STATEMENT ON SDI AT PRESS CONFERENCE
IN WASHINGTON ON 22 DECEMBER AS AGREED WITH PRESIDENT REAGAN

President Reagan and I have had a very thorough and extensive discussion of the prospects for arms control negotiations, in the course of which we also naturally touched on the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI).

I was not surprised to discover that we see matters in very much the same light. I told the President that I had made it absolutely clear to Mr. Gorbachev that there was no question of the Soviet Union being able to divide the United Kingdom from the United States on these matters. Wedge-driving is just not on.

I told the President of my firm conviction that the SDI research programme should go ahead. Research is of course permitted under existing US-Soviet treaties; and we of course know that the Russians already have their research programme, and, in the US view, have already gone beyond research.

We agreed on four points:

- 1) The US, and Western, aim was not to achieve superiority, but to maintain balance, taking account of Soviet developments;
- 2) SDI-related deployment would, in view of treaty obligations, have to be a matter for negotiation;
- 3) The overall aim is to enhance, not undercut, deterrence;
- 4) East-West negotiation should aim to achieve security with reduced levels of offensive systems on both sides. This will be the purpose of the resumed US-Soviet negotiations on arms control, which I warmly welcome.

① Nelson U.S.



File b.c. Vanessa.

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

29 January 1985

Prime Minister's Briefing Meeting on Arms Control
2 February at Chequers

The meeting will begin at 1000 hours and conclude with a working lunch.

Please let Mrs. Cummings at 10 Downing Street know if you will be arriving by private car, with details of the number and make.

C.D.P.

Charles Powell

Copies to:-

PS/Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary
PS/Defence Secretary
PS/Mr. Luce
PS/Mr. Stanley
Sir Clive Whitmore
Sir Michael Quinlan
Chief of the Defence Staff
Sir Percy Cradock
Mr. Cartledge
Professor Norman
Mr. Weston (FCO)

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