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CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER

*See summary
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US/SOVIET SUMMIT

The Foreign Secretary advised you last week that your message to President Reagan about the summit ought to go fairly soon if it was to be properly taken into account in American preparations. He has now provided the attached draft. It comes in two parts: a message and an annex.

It would be helpful to have your reaction. I find it bland, uninteresting and too inclined to accept - indeed encourage - the view of those in the US Administration who take a minimalist view of the Summit. If you are to send a message, you should set what we think the West's aims should be and then suggest what progress can feasibly be made at the summit towards them. The aims should include precise ideas on arms control. The message should also propose a number of criteria by which the success of the summit could be judged. I don't think much of the idea of splitting the message into two parts, especially since the more interesting bits on arms control are in the Annex. It simply doesn't make sense to divide the substance from the style. When set against the vast amount of briefing material which the President will be getting, this simply won't make an impact. It's a pity the Foreign and Commonwealth Office didn't pay more attention to the guidance you gave them in advance (attached).

If you agree that the draft is substandard, what next?

(a) We can try to assemble some outside experts. But you had the Sovietologists pre-Gorbachev and didn't get much out of them: and it's you not they who have had the direct experience of him. Anyway, your diary hardly allows it.

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(b) We can have a meeting of Ministers and senior officials to commission a fresh draft.

(c) Or Percy Cradock and I can have a go at producing a version.

Another possibility would be to invite Bud McFarlane over here, so that you can put your views directly to him. I think you should do this, but after you've sent a message and rather nearer the time of the summit.

Agree (b) or (c)?

The next draft is worse than unless. I should dream of writing it. Try (C). Above - let's into account the judgement we have to take

P.O.

C.D.P.

Post- divide into 2 papers not

(C.D. POWELL)

6 September 1985

M.B. The talks must unblock the door to progress at Geneva. A general 'letting to know you' is not enough.

SRWAID



hws

RJ
cc PC

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

31 July 1985

Dear Sir,

US/SOVIET SUMMIT

The Prime Minister has now on several occasions told the US Administration that we shall be letting them have our thoughts on the forthcoming US/Soviet Summit. Although we have not said when we shall do so, a sensible target date would be the middle of October.

I am sure that the Prime Minister will in due course want to hold a discussion of the views that we might put forward. This is unlikely to be practicable before the second half of September, so I think it would be useful to have a preliminary draft of a substantial message on paper for the Americans by then which could form the basis of discussion at a meeting. You will certainly have ideas on what this should cover. My suggestions are:-

- i) there should be an introductory section on Mr Gorbachev himself, based on the Prime Minister's experience of him here. This could contain some suggestions on how to handle him.
- ii) this would be a lead in to our analysis of what we expect the Soviet Union's aims to be at the Summit and the various tactical ploys which they will use in support of these aims, in particular to influence public opinion in Europe.
- iii) the most important section would then deal with what we suggest that United States' aims at the Summit should be. The main message here would be that we acknowledge that there will be no substantial agreements prepared in advance for signature at the Summit. Equally, a getting-to-know-you meeting alone will not be enough to satisfy public opinion, at least in Europe, that the United States has made a serious effort to achieve some forward movement in East/West relations. The Summit must give a specific impetus to negotiations on a wide range of

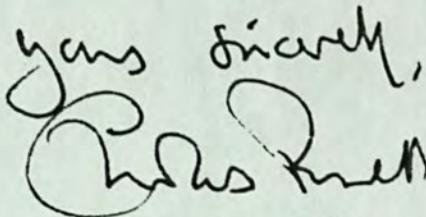
RJ

issues, above all on arms control. This means not just to the Geneva negotiations, but to negotiations on chemical weapons, on a test ban and perhaps also on MBFR.

- iv) there might then be a separate section on the handling of the Strategic Defence Initiative in the context of the Summit. This is obviously delicate ground. The sort of ideas which we have trailed since the Prime Minister's visit to Washington in February - reaffirmation of the ABM Treaty, an agreement on permitted research within the Treaty, reductions in offensive weapons and provision for formal review of the offence/defence balance after a fixed period - have received no specific US response (in part because we have never fully deployed them). We may just want to put them forward again. But we might also consider whether we want to encourage the Americans to put some slightly more radical proposals to the Russians, covering for instance deep cuts in offensive missiles combined with limited deployment of a strategic defence system by both sides.
- v) next would be any points we want to put to the Americans on regional issues (Middle East) or more general problems (Jewish emigration).
- vi) finally there might be a section on how we suggest the Alliance be handled to assure the maximum degree of solidarity at the time of the Summit.

It would be helpful to have a draft covering these points and others by the time of the Prime Minister's return from the Middle East.

I am copying this letter to Richard Mottram (Ministry of Defence) and Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

Yours sincerely,


Charles Powell

Len Appleyard Esq
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.