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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

21 November 1985

Dear Charles,

US/Soviet Summit: Update on  
Briefing for NAC

I sent you on 18 November a provisional brief for the Prime Minister's use at today's meeting of the NAC when President Reagan will brief the Allies on the outcome of the Summit. Detailed information on the latter is still coming in from Geneva, but the latest developments are summarised at Annex.

In short, the Summit at this stage appears to have been a qualified success, and to have made more progress than Washington or Moscow appeared to have expected. The line-to-take in the provisional brief remains valid, including the welcome for the impulse given to arms control negotiations and to the agreement of a further meeting in 1986.

In speaking to the press, against the background of the up-beat tone adopted by both President Reagan and Gorbachev this morning, the Prime Minister may feel able to be rather more positive than suggested earlier. She may wish to refer to her earlier hopes for the Summit, expressed at the Lord Mayor's Banquet - Annex A of the provisional brief. With the possible exception of the SDI reference, on which further information is awaited, these appear to have been realised.

I am sending copies of this letter to Richard Mottram and Michael Stark.

Yours ever,

Le Appleyard

(L V Appleyard)  
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq  
10 Downing Street

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US/Soviet Summit: Developments, 21 November

1. Mr Shultz and Mr Shevardnadze signed a joint document this morning; details of its contents are still awaited.
2. In statements at their concluding ceremony, President Reagan and Mr Gorbachev agreed that their discussions, which had covered all aspects of bilateral and international relations, had been useful; Mr Reagan spoke of a fresh start, with the two sides heading in the right direction. The talks had produced a number of interim results, summarised in the joint document.
3. Among these were: a decision to accelerate the nuclear negotiations; agreement to hold further consultations on regional questions; commitment to further meetings in 1986 and 1987; and the establishment of a process for a more intensive relationship, which may include new agreements on bilateral relations (air services, consulates etc). Mr Gorbachev said that solutions had not however been achieved to the "most important" questions.
4. Both leaders committed themselves to pursue practical steps for halting the arms race (Mr Gorbachev specifically referred to space), and reducing nuclear arsenals; Mr Gorbachev spoke of the search for stability, and Mr Reagan of the need to advance the cause of liberty. Both agreed that the test of the Geneva Summit would be shown in subsequent deeds, not words, and might take time to emerge.
5. In his subsequent press conference, Mr Gorbachev spoke of the need for the US to accept the Soviet Union as an equal, and of the need for equal security for both sides. A lack of Soviet security was destabilizing and therefore bad for the US. On SDI the US side had tried to explain the defensive nature of their intentions, but the Soviet side did not accept this.

Transcript by  
JAMES LEE of:

Mr Powell

PRESS CONFERENCE GIVEN BY THE PRIME MINISTER,  
MRS. THATCHER, AT DOWNING STREET, ON THURSDAY,  
NOVEMBER 21, 1985  
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Ladies and Gentlemen:

We have just returned from Brussels where, together with 15 other nations, we went to receive a briefing from President Reagan and Mr. Schultz on the meeting which has been held between President Reagan and Mr. Gorbachev.

I think we obviously had a similar impression to that which you have already received. First, that the meeting was very cordial, very constructive, and gave rise to a basis of confidence and hope for the future.

Second, that although no details were negotiated, it is expected that that meeting will result in a strong impetus to the arms control negotiations. You have seen from the Joint Statement that the arms control negotiations include those on chemical warfare and the those on mutual and balanced force reductions going on in Vienna.

The SDI matter was not, of course, resolved. The two nations, I think, discussed it very very thoroughly indeed, each rehearsing their own arguments and talking them through with the other.

But the only thing which I think is absolutely clear of SDI and the nuclear arms control negotiations are those on the

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intermediate nuclear forces, upon which you will have seen from the Joint Statement that they expect an interim statement to be reached at Geneva itself.

So we had two things: first, the basis of confidence; second, an impetus to the arms control negotiations; and thirdly, it is quite clear that the existing treaties will in fact be honoured, in particular the anti-ballistic missile treaty and the SALT honoured on a reciprocal basis because, as you know, it was never formally ratified by the United States, although its terms have in fact been upheld.

A number of regional issues were discussed, but mainly between George Shultz and Mr. Shevadnardze.

Other matters, you will have seen in the Joint Statement about possible progress on nuclear fusion by cooperation between nations and various other matters in the Joint Statement, some of them, I think, which possibly exceeded what we were expecting, and therefore I do think that it has been a success, both from President Reagan's viewpoint, from Mr. Gorbachev's viewpoint, from the viewpoint of the whole Western Alliance, and I think from the viewpoint of ordinary people, who will be very grateful indeed that the meeting has taken place, that it will be the prelude to two more meetings, and that they feel that whatever the difficulties, they are being discussed and therefore there is greater hope of resolution and greater hope of peace and stability than there was perhaps before the meeting took place.

Every one of the Heads of Government and the Foreign Secretaries at the NATO meeting was both very complimentary to President Reagan and very supportive of him, very supportive indeed.

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Grateful to him for his efforts, grateful in particular for the amount of work that he personally did and for the amount of direct negotiation that he did with Mr. Gorbachev.

Now, your questions!

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QUESTION

Prime Minister, you mentioned as your third point that it was quite clear that existing treaties will be honoured. There was some confusion in Geneva, I gather, as to whether in fact any assurances had been given by President Reagan on both the ABM treaty and prolonging SALT 2. But you can say quite categorically, can you, that such assurances were given?

PRIME MINISTER

No, I cannot say categorically on SALT 2, which is why I said that SALT 2 will be honoured on a reciprocal basis, because you are quite right, SALT 2 in any case was never ratified because you will remember of Afghanistan. That is why I specifically said SALT 2 will be honoured on a reciprocal basis.

I think, if you look at what President Reagan said in their joint press conference this morning, I seem to recall that one of his points, when he said: "We know the right questions to ask!" and one was: "Will past and present agreements be fulfilled?" and then he said: "America is ready to answer 'Yes'". If you will just check on that, I am sure you will have the text.

QUESTION

Prime Minister, was President Reagan given any indication that he could expect something - or the West could expect something - on Afghanistan?

PRIME MINISTER

There were, I think, perhaps more detailed discussions, I understand, on Afghanistan than on many of the other particular

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matters. I cannot tell you what the result was, but it was very thoroughly discussed.

QUESTION

Prime Minister, did President Reagan give any idea of the sort of interim agreement on INF that might be on the table or that might be worked out?

PRIME MINISTER

No. I had the impression that the kind of interim agreement he was hoping for was the one for which proposals are already on the table in Geneva. I would not like to go further than that, because I am not quite certain how far he wishes one to go.

QUESTION

Did President Reagan give you any hint as to how the gap between the two sides on SDI could possibly be bridged?

PRIME MINISTER

No. There is clearly a gap. We are very much aware of it, but the United States will continue with research. I believe they are absolutely right so to do. I believe the President put his view very very strongly indeed, which as you know, is that it would be very strange if one did not attempt to find a defence to the world's most dangerous weapon, when throughout history, one has always tried to find a defence to the latest offensive weapon. That, I am afraid, is still what he called an "open question".

QUESTION

But is it absolutely right, Mrs. Thatcher, for President Reagan to proceed with Star Wars, since Mr. Gorbachev has made it plain that if he does there cannot really be any proper deal on arms control?

PRIME MINISTER

It is absolutely right to proceed with the research for the reason which I have indicated. Most people would find it very strange indeed if, faced with the world's most dangerous weapon, one did not try to find a defence to the world's most dangerous weapon, when we tried to find a defence to all the world's other weapons and moreover, as you know, the Soviet Union is doing a considerable amount of research on anti-ballistic missiles - a different kind of research in some respects from that which America is doing - but she already has an effective anti-ballistic missile system around Moscow, and that is being updated, and she has already done quite a lot of work on lasers; and, of course, she has an anti-satellite satellite system which, of course, is ahead of anything that the United States has got in that particular sphere.

So I do not think there is any question of the United States dropping SDI research, nor indeed do I believe that the Soviet Union will drop hers. Perhaps you might say therein lies the possibility of reconciliation, because they are doing it, each in their own way.



QUESTION

Mrs. Thatcher, you said that existing treaties would be honoured. Does that imply that the human rights provisions of the Helsinki Agreement are now going to be honoured, specifically those relating to Soviet Jews?

PRIME MINISTER

Well now, I was not referring to any briefing from the Soviet Union, because I have had none. I believe that the anti-ballistic missile treaty will be honoured and I believe that was the meaning of what the President said this morning and, of course, he indicated again that the treaties will be honoured and SALT 2 honoured on a reciprocal basis. Always, of course, there are discussions of human rights which, of course, is what you are getting at, with the Helsinki Accords. The United States, as you know, has indeed honoured the Helsinki Accords. We very much hope that there will be greater freedom of movement and a greater observance of human rights on the Soviet side than there has been, but there is nothing specific coming out of the Summit. But you will recall that on other occasions when the relationships between the United States and the Soviet Union have been much better, then there have been more people coming out of the Soviet Union.

DAVID ADMANSON

Prime Minister, do you think agreement can be reached quickly on chemical weapons and MBFR, for instance, before the next Summit Meeting?

PRIME MINISTER

I would not like to give you heightened expectations of

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particular agreements. I think that the IMF might perhaps be the one that comes out first, but as one did point out there, discussing the general approach and reaching agreement on the general approach and in such a cordial atmosphere and convincing the Soviet Union of the total sincerity of the United States and that the United States would never start a war and democracies do not, is extremely valuable. But getting down to the nitty gritty of those complex nuclear arms negotiations is very difficult and, of course, on chemical weapons there has been a verification problem which we have not yet solved. So do not expect sudden...I would not expect sudden results on those matters. There is still a lot of hard negotiation, detailed negotiation, in those separate arms negotiations for a still to do.

President Reagan himself said the results of this Summit will be tested over the months, indeed over the years, but do not have sudden expectations of sudden results.

QUESTION

From time to time, the United Kingdom has been contributing very much to the peace of the world and preventing nuclear war is the responsibility of the whole world, so what do you think how the Fifth World countries, such as China, some Asian country or some African country can create a united force and a concerted effort against the nuclear war and to what extent the Fifth World has been contributing to maintain the peace of the world?

PRIME MINISTER

Well, the most obvious way, for those nations who have not yet done so, is by signing the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Agreement. You know that the Review Conference was held this year and I think we have been very fortunate in the years since it was signed that I think there has only been one more nuclear weapons power and it is thought that in the coming ten or more years there might be a number of other nuclear powers, so the really important thing is for nations which have not done so to sign that agreement.

QUESTION

Were you personally surprised at how well both leaders got on or, from what you know of both of them, was it what you expected and is there anything you can say about President Reagan's personal observations about Mr. Gorbachev?

PRIME MINISTER

No, I was not personally surprised that they personally got on very well. I thought that they would, because I have had discussions myself with Mr. Gorbachev and he discussed and debates very freely and very easily and I knew that President Reagan was working extremely hard and I knew his views and how strongly he feels, for example, on SDI, and I knew that he was totally sincere in that the United States would never have a first strike attack or start a war; but that has always been the difficulty - in getting that message across to the Soviet Union.

No it was not a question of personal observations. The chemistry was right or the alchemy, whichever you like to call it, and they did get on very well with each other.

QUESTION

Yes. Did he actually say anything....

PRIME MINISTER

I am not going to repeat every single thing! They got on very well together.

QUESTION

Prime Minister, was the British or French deterrent mentioned in the talks?

PRIME MINISTER

No, because we already agreed that they would not be.

QUESTION

So do we take it that that rules them out of any subsequent negotiations?

PRIME MINISTER

No, they have never been in the START negotiations nor in the INF negotiations. They really are our own independent deterrent and as you know, Polaris is already at an irreducible minimum.

QUESTION

The President got no pressure from Mr. Gorbachev ?

PRIME MINISTER

As far as I am aware, no.

QUESTION

In this improved atmosphere, Prime Minister, do you believe that there is now an improved possibility that Mr. Shevadnardze will be coming here in the near future and that you will be visiting Mr. Gorbachev in Moscow?

PRIME MINISTER

I think perhaps there are enough international visits between President Reagan and Mr. Gorbachev scheduled for the future at the moment. I have no plans to go to Moscow. We have asked Mr. Shevadnardze to come here this coming year to visit the Foreign Secretary.

FOREIGN SECRETARY

Yes, he has accepted the invitation originally extended to Mr. Gromyko, and we are still awaiting the fixing of dates. That is in prospect.

QUESTION

Prime Minister, you said that you could do business with Mr. Gorbachev. As he said really quite clearly today that so long as SDI was dropped then there was the prospect of deep arms cuts, is that not a basis on which you would like to see business done?

PRIME MINISTER

is a  
This/matter upon which business will indeed have to be done, but do not think that all the work on SDI is on the side of the United States. There is a great deal of work on strategic defence against nuclear weapons going on in the Soviet Union. So both sides are doing some.

SAME QUESTIONER

Does that not cast a potential shadow over everything else in the last 48 hours?

PRIME MINISTER

No. I do not think it does. I do not think you should underestimate the atmosphere of cordiality and confidence, but also the realism that there is a great deal more to be done, and I think it is this balance which I found so striking. The atmosphere is confident, but there is no euphoria or complacency. It is confident, but both sides, I think, are aware that the real hard grind will be done in the nuclear arms talks and they are aware of the difficulties and they are aware that SDI has not yet been resolved, and I cannot go further, because there is not any further to be gone at the moment.

QUESTION

Prime Minister, you were reported on one news bulletin this evening as having chided President Reagan for losing the propaganda competition in the run-up to the Summit? Is this in fact true?

PRIME MINISTER

No, I have said nothing about propaganda in the run-up, nothing at all about propaganda in the run-up.

QUESTION

Did you chide him at all?

PRIME MINISTER

I did not chide him! Whoever misreported that?

QUESTION

Prime Minister, did anybody chide him?

PRIME MINISTER

No, no. It was fully supportive, fully supportive.

BERNARD INGHAM

You are trying hard!

QUESTION

Prime Minister, there have been previous thaws in relations between the Soviet Union and the United States, but they have always ended in tears. Do you think there is a greater will this time to actually make it work?

PRIME MINISTER

I think that there is more hope since the meeting than there was before the meeting. I think the reason for that hope is not only the personalities of the two, but I think it has also something to do with the historic stage that we have reached, both with nuclear weapons and perhaps the economic stage that the Soviet Union has reached; that undoubtedly, the leadership of the Soviet Union would very much like to have enough economic room to raise the standard of living of the Soviet people; that that is very important for them and that is an additional reason for trying to reach arms control agreements, but both sides - as you will notice in the Joint Statement and in the press conference - neither side is seeking superiority over the other. Both sides reckon that security comes from a balance of arms and verification. So I think that there is

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more hope of continuing improvement than there has been for a long time.

QUESTION

It might be a little cheeky to ask this question, Mrs. Thatcher, but do you think that the role of television over the last few days may have affected the way you voted last night?

PRIME MINISTER

No, not at all, not at all. I do not know whether you actually listened. I went in last night. As you know, it took me quite a time to decide how I would vote last night and I did decide early evening and then I went into the House to listen to the last speeches as if you listen to the last speeches, if I had not already decided to vote the way I did, by the time I had heard those speeches I would have decided to vote the way I did.

QUESTION

Will you sleep more soundly tonight, Prime Minister?

PRIME MINISTER

I sleep quite soundly in any event, because I do not get a lot of sleep, so I sleep quite soundly. As I<sup>say, I</sup> think it is this balanced assessment. It is excellent; they are confident; I think that both of them heard arguments from the other that they had not heard put that way before and therefore there is a much greater understanding of how the other thinks. That is good.



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But there is a realisation, a realism, a word that you heard used frequently by President Reagan, that the hard grind of negotiation would have to be done, but they are willing to give an impetus to those negotiations and therefore the will to settle some of the outstanding problems.

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DRAFT PRESS STATEMENT

PRIME MINISTER'S PRESS CONFERENCE

The Foreign Secretary and I have just returned from the NATO headquarters in Brussels where this afternoon President Reagan gave his NATO Allies a valuable and encouraging briefing on his two days of talks with Mr Gorbachev in Geneva.

My overall impression - and I believe it is shared by my NATO colleagues who heard his account - is that the Summit was a successful meeting - and a meeting which has indeed brought a new start in relations between the US and the Soviet Union.

Geneva in other words is a beginning and not an end.

President Reagan said in his statement this morning "there is hard work ahead" - a sentiment which Mr Gorbachev agreed.

There is indeed much work to be done if we are to secure a safer world but the Summit has I believe, created the opportunity for that work to go ahead - <sup>and for arms reduction</sup> negotiations to be accelerated.

First however, I would like to pay tribute to President Reagan's work at the Summit. He clearly went there extremely well prepared, as I knew he would be, and determined to make progress.

He and Mr Gorbachev talked together for far longer than had been expected and I know how demanding such discussions can be. He deserves our thanks for his great efforts for peace.

You will recall that in my speech at the Lord Mayor's Banquet on 11 November I expressed four hopes for Geneva.

First was that it would establish a better basis of confidence between the US and the Soviet Union. Both President Reagan and Mr Gorbachev seem satisfied it has done this. Certainly they seem to have established a better understanding and a personal rapport.

My second hope was that it would give an impetus to negotiations on substantial reductions in nuclear weapons.

Again my hopes have been realised. Both President Reagan and Mr Gorbachev are clear this is one important outcome of their talks.

X My third hope <sup>was</sup> ~~is~~ that the Summit would strengthen existing arms control agreements and I am assured by President Reagan that this is indeed the aim of both the USA and the Soviet Union. Finally I expressed the hope that the Summit would lead to a better understanding on the goals of SDI research programmes and on the constraints which will be observed in developing them.

Here, Mr Gorbachev has expressly stated that he understands the US position on SDI better as a result of meeting President Reagan, while <sup>not</sup> ~~of~~ course accepting the American point of view. President Reagan has also reiterated to his NATO colleagues today the four points on SDI which he and I worked out at Camp David nearly a year ago .

I said at the Guildhall that if each of these four hopes were realised the Summit would have achieved a realistic outcome.

It follows from this that I am encouraged by what I have heard and seen since the Geneva Summit.

However the real report on Geneva, as President Reagan said this morning, will come over the months and years ahead as the negotiations in Geneva proceed and the USA and Soviet Union develop, as we hope they do, their relationship.

But it is encouraging that after six years without a Summit the meeting went so well and that new impetus is not merely to be given to developing a better relationship between the two great powers but also to the momentum of arms control negotiations.

●believe the world tonight is a more hopeful place than it was this morning. We as Allies of the United States must do all in our power to assist President Reagan in the hard and no doubt sometimes frustrating work that lies ahead, to achieve the safer world which is so manifestly his goal and to which Mr Gorbachev also seems to have committed himself.

① A STRATEGIC QUESTION:

BOTH ALPES ON NEED TO  
ENHANCE STABILITY WITHOUT  
SEEKING SUPERIORITY —

DO YOU THINK YOU  
HAVE ESTABLISHED / CAN ESTABLISH  
A CONVICTION IN WIS  
MIND THAT, U.S.A / WEST  
REALLY DOESN'T SEEK  
SUPERIORITY, BUT ONLY  
SECURITY?

② A PRACTICAL QUESTION:

BOTH SIDES ALPES THEY WANT  
A WORLD WIDE BAN ON  
CHEMICAL WEAPONS. DO YOU  
THINK THEY'RE SERIOUS +  
SINCERE IN THAT?