



UNITED KINGDOM PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
ON THE NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL  
OTAN/NATO  
1110 BRUSSELS  
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11 March 1987

B J P Fall Esq CMG  
Room E 303  
Foreign & Commonwealth Office

*Dear Brian,*

THE PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO MOSCOW: CONSULTATIONS

1. As you will know from my letter to Lyn Parker of 10 February, I was disappointed to learn from Charles Powell's letter of 30 January to Tony Galsworthy that the Prime Minister had decided not to come to Brussels immediately before or after her visit to Moscow. It also seemed from Lyn Parker's letter to me of 26 February that there was little chance of the Secretary of State briefing the Council on his return journey as the Secretary General (and I) had hoped might be an alternative.
2. I had intended to let the matter lie there - while hoping, of course, that the Secretary of State would feel able to change his mind. Now that the Prime Minister will be seeing President Mitterrand and Chancellor Kohl before her departure (and in the light of FCO telegram No 54 to Brussels), circumstances seem to have changed (Lyn Parker's letter under reference refers). I think that the question of a visit by the Prime Minister or, failing that, by the Secretary of State to brief the Council should perhaps be looked at again.
3. The points made in earlier discussions remain, in my view, valid. A political briefing would be seen here as a welcome change from the constant round of high level American visitors (including, very possibly, George Shultz in the second week of April on his way back from Moscow). I do not myself think that there is any longer a risk that the importance of the Prime Minister's visit would be inflated by a stop-over in Brussels (the final sentence of Charles Powell's letter of 30 January). Gorbachev's concessions in the LRINF negotiations and recent Soviet statements on SRINF may have complicated the hand the Prime Minister has to play. But they have also increased the interest of our partners in the outcome of the visit and have underlined the importance of an up-to-date and high level assessment by a non-American of attitudes in Moscow. I suspect that there will be very genuine disappointment here and in capitals if the Council receives no more than a routine briefing, however comprehensive,

/from



from me or from another senior official.

4. Since dictating the above I have had a chance to discuss the matter with Lord Carrington. You are already aware of his belief that we were missing a trick. He, like me, is concerned that in the new situation a failure to provide a briefing at the political level might be misunderstood eg in Rome. He very much hopes the Prime Minister will be able to review her decision.

5. I would be grateful therefore if you could consider the possibility of a new submission recommending a briefing here by either the Prime Minister or the Secretary of State - difficult though the scheduling and other problems attendant on such a briefing are bound to be.

*Yours ever*

*Michael*

MICHAEL ALEXANDER

cc: Lyn Parker Esq, Private Office, FCO



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Spoken to Mr.  
Alexander.

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11.3.87

Dear Charles,

I enclose a blind copy of a letter I have just sent to Brian Fall.

I do not, of course, know whether the Secretary of State will choose to reopen the matter. But you should be aware that my text somewhat understates Peter Carnidge's position on two points :-

(a) He has always thought that in not giving a political briefing after the Moscow visit we were missing a trick that was well worth taking. With the exception of the Mitterand / Kohl / Shultz discussions (the Americans are actively working at the modalities of getting Shultz here) Peter is