

CDP
u/k

14

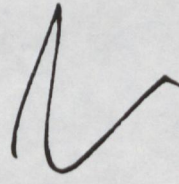
Copy no of 8

From: John Fretwell

Date: 9 November 1987

- cc PS/Mr Mellor (2)
- PS/PUS (3)
- Mr Ratford (4)
- Mr Fall (5)
- Mr Hemans (6)
- Mr Lever (7)
- Mr Sheinwald (8)

SECRET BURNING BUSH



Private Secretary

QUADRIPARTITE MEETING OF POLITICAL DIRECTORS, LONDON, 5 NOVEMBER

1. The main points of discussion on East/West subjects at last Thursday's quadripartite meeting in London have been reported telegraphically. I now submit the records on regional issues.
2. Discussion was generally open and frank. Mrs Ridgway was keen to share US thinking after recent US-Soviet exchanges. Noiville seemed somewhat reserved; von Richthofen had more to contribute.
3. Particular points of interest were:-

a) Arms control

Three significant INF issues remain unresolved; verification of suspect SS 20's in SS 25 sites, non-circumvention and follow-on negotiations (where the Russians are bidding to include aircraft.) American positions were said to be firm on all three points. Despite Shultz's wish to avoid further involvement, he may have to meet Shevardnadze again if Treaty texts are to be ready by 21 November for final processing. START prospects are still clouded by problems of verification and the relationship with the ABMT. But Mrs Ridgway acknowledged that the latest Soviet position on sub-limits is a step forward; and if the US-Soviet momentum is maintained, there will be a lot of pressure to find solutions on verification and the ABM link. However, the Administration (already wary about the likely Senate debate on INF ratification) will not want to submit a suspect START agreement which could prejudice the chances of both Treaties.

Renewed German pleas for greater urgency in dealing with SNF drew frosty replies from the other three.

b) Alliance Consultations:

The Administration have not made a decision on whether to propose a NATO summit immediately after the US-Soviet one. The balance of Washington opinion seems to be against, but the White House has still to pronounce. Views in the Quad were pretty much in line: a preference for Shultz to de-brief at the NAC and for a NATO summit to precede the planned 1988 Reagan-Gorbachev meeting in Moscow. The Department are submitting draft instructions to Washington separately.

SECRET BURNING BUSH

c) Relations with the Soviet Union:

There were no new insights into Gorbachev's manoeuvring over the US-Soviet summit, but most of us felt this was due more to miscalculation (perhaps tinged with impulsiveness) than to either a new considered strategy or to a sudden change in Gorbachev's domestic standing. Mrs Ridgway gave a useful account of the Shultz-Shevardnadze discussions on regional issues. This indicated a Soviet effort to convey an impression of greater openness and cooperativeness in the handling of these questions, but as yet no substantive new policies. There seems little prospect of any breakthrough on regional matters in time for the December summit. At present arms control remains the core of the US-Soviet relationship. Mrs Ridgway indicated that the Americans hoped to use the approach of the summit to exert pressure on the Russians on human rights. (We can expect the usual Soviet pre-summit gestures, although the list of symbolic dissident names is getting shorter. There may be implications for our CSCE strategy, including our attitude to the proposed Moscow conference.)

d) Iran-Iraq:

A gloomy discussion, reflecting scepticism about Soviet intentions and about the readiness of non-Permanent Members of the Security Council, or of the Arab States, to apply pressure to help secure a more forthcoming Soviet approach. But no changes of policy envisaged.

e) Angola/Namibia:

The Germans proposed reactivation of the Namibia Contact Group (US, UK, France, FRG, Canada) which has not functioned for several years since France's withdrawal. The Department are considering this.

f) Arab-Israel

I asked Mrs Ridgway about press reports of a new proposal for talks to be held under US-Soviet auspices instead of in the framework of an international conference. She ducked for cover, claiming to have heard nothing at all from Shultz about what went on during his Middle East tour. I suspect this answer was a shade disingenuous, which is unusual for Mrs Ridgway.

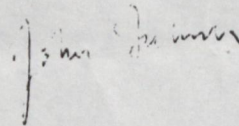
g) WEU

Mrs Ridgway claimed credit for the new positive US line on WEU, but went on to ask how we would now implement the bright promises we had made and how we would keep allies, especially the US, informed. I said we needed time to catch our breath after the titanic efforts on the Platform.

SECRET BURNING BUSH

h) US-Spain

The Americans are resigned to Spanish renunciation of the bases agreement this week. They do not think this will prejudice the chance of reaching agreement in the next 6 months. But they are concerned about the impact on public opinion, particularly in the US.



John Fretwell

SECRET BURNING BUSH