



10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

16 May 1989

Dear Stephen,

SOVIET UNION

Mr. Kossov of the Soviet Embassy came to see me this afternoon to brief me on the outcome of the Baker visit to Moscow. His account did not seem to me to differ very much from that we have already received from the Americans. But I would just record three points:

- Adopting his most conspiratorial manner, Kossov said that there was a school of thought in the Soviet establishment that thought it would be better to rule out a third zero on SNF and set the aim instead at common ceilings somewhere between NATO's current level and zero. I said that this would not get us further forward: we were not in the game of negotiations on SNF at all. It was for the Soviet Union to reduce its SNF unilaterally to our levels, and to stop protesting about modernisation when they knew very well that they had modernised their own SNF.
- Dropping his voice lower still, Kossov said that he was aware that we had doubts whether the Soviet military had told Gorbachev the whole truth about the quantities of chemical agent held by the Soviet armed forces. We were not absolutely alone in sharing these doubts. But the information which the Prime Minister had given Mr. Gorbachev was not on its own sufficient for him to call for a full scale investigation of the position. His military advisers continued to dismiss the Prime Minister's claims. Was their any further information we could offer? I said that the Prime Minister had spelled matters out very clearly to Mr. Gorbachev. I would consider whether they was anything further we could say but I doubted it.
- Lastly, when telephoning me yesterday to make this appointment, Kossov was very keen to have an early lunch with me, preferably on Friday this week, to the point of being quite insistent about it. I said that I did not have any free lunches to mid-June. But I was left wondering why he was so keen on Friday.

Good evening
Chris Smith
 (C. D. POWELL)

J. S. Wall, Esq.,
 Foreign and Commonwealth Office.