

Mr. Gales

France

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Modernisation agreement?

DRAFT MESSAGE TO MR. ANDROPOV

SS20 modernised then INF

we are now modernising ours, will

Note:

I conveyed the Prime Minister's comments to Mr. Bone (FCO) on Thursday 1 September.

We agreed that those attending the Senior officials meeting in Brussels would be instructed to take account of them in clearing the UK's response with colleagues and the FCO would then submit a revised draft reply.

FEB

7-9

I THANK YOU FOR YOUR MESSAGE OF 27 AUGUST ON THE GENEVA TALKS ON INTERMEDIATE RANGE NUCLEAR FORCES (INF) AND FOR SENDING ME THE TEXT OF YOUR PRAVDA INTERVIEW. IN RESPONSE I SHOULD BEGIN BY RE-EMPHASISING TO YOU, IN ABSOLUTE SINCERITY, THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S DESIRE FOR THE NEGOTIATIONS IN GENEVA TO SUCCEED. IT IS STILL POSSIBLE TO REACH AGREEMENT TO BAN COMPLETELY THOSE WEAPONS ON BOTH SIDES WHICH ARE OF PARTICULAR CONCERN - THE SS20s, THE SS4s AND THE SS5s ON YOUR SIDE AND THE CRUISE AND PERSHING II MISSILES ON NATO'S SIDE. IF SUCH AN AGREEMENT CAN BE REACHED BY THE END OF THIS YEAR NATO NEED NEVER DEPLOY ANY OF THE NEW WEAPONS.

will draw only weapon when come in perhaps we should be with drawing weapon.

I NOTE WITH GREAT INTEREST YOUR STATEMENT THAT, IN THE CONTEXT OF AN OVERALL AGREEMENT, YOU WOULD BE PREPARED TO DESTROY THE SS20 MISSILES NOW STATIONED IN THE WESTERN PART OF THE SOVIET UNION. AS YOU KNOW, WE HAD BEEN UNDER THE IMPRESSION THAT YOU HAD INTENDED ONLY TO MOVE THOSE WEAPONS TO SOVIET ASIA. THIS WAS UNACCEPTABLE TO US, FIRSTLY BECAUSE THESE MOBILE MISSILES COULD QUICKLY BE MOVED BACK AGAIN TO EUROPE IN A TIME OF CRISIS AND SECONDLY BECAUSE WE HAD NO WISH TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF WEAPONS FACING OUR FRIENDS IN ASIA. WE HOPE YOU WILL EXPAND UPON YOUR PROPOSAL WHEN THE NEGOTIATIONS AT GENEVA RESUME ON 6 SEPTEMBER.

② Please note - we should not "ret" on France

BUT I BELIEVE THAT YOUR MESSAGE REVEALS SOME MISUNDERSTANDING OF THE BASIC SECURITY REQUIREMENTS WHICH UNDERLIE NATO'S POSITION IN THE INF TALKS. THE SECURITY OF WESTERN EUROPE DEMANDS THAT A BALANCE BE ALLOWED BETWEEN SOVIET AND AMERICAN INTERMEDIATE RANGE NUCLEAR FORCES. IT IS SIMPLY NOT POSSIBLE FOR US TO ACCEPT THAT YOU SHOULD MAINTAIN A MONOPOLY OF MISSILES OF THIS RANGE WHILE INSISTING THAT THE AMERICANS SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO INSTALL A SINGLE MISSILE. THE PROBLEM OF THE DISPARITY IN THESE FORCES BECAME ACUTE FOR US WHEN IN THE LATE 1970s THE SOVIET UNION BEGAN THE MASSIVE BUILD-UP OF SS20s, FOR WHICH WE COULD SEE NO DEFENSIVE PURPOSE, AT A

/TIME WHEN,

TIME WHEN, AS NOW, NATO HAD NO COMPARABLE MISSILES. OUR PREFERENCE WOULD STILL BE THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO MISSILES OF THIS TYPE ON EITHER SIDE. AS LONG AS THIS SOLUTION IS NOT ACCEPTABLE TO YOU, WE AND OUR ALLIES WILL PURSUE AN INTERIM AGREEMENT; BUT THIS WILL HAVE TO RESPECT THE PRINCIPLE OF BALANCE BETWEEN YOURSELF AND THE AMERICANS.

IT FOLLOWS FROM WHAT I HAVE SAID THAT NATO CANNOT ACCEPT THAT THE NUCLEAR FORCES OF BRITAIN AND FRANCE SHOULD BE TAKEN ACCOUNT OF IN THE INF NEGOTIATIONS. THIS IS A POSITION UNANIMOUSLY AGREED BY NATO SINCE 1979 FOR REASONS OF SECURITY OF THE ALLIANCE AS A WHOLE. OUR NUCLEAR FORCES ARE STRATEGIC WEAPONS. THE SOVIET UNION ITSELF ACKNOWLEDGED DURING THE SALT TALKS THAT THIS WAS THE CASE. THEY HAVE NO PLACE IN NEGOTIATIONS ON INTERMEDIATE RANGE WEAPONS WHERE WE NEED TO ADDRESS THE PROBLEMS OF THE SOVIET AND AMERICAN GROUND LAUNCHED WEAPONS WHICH ARE OF SUCH CONCERN TO BOTH SIDES.

I MUST SAY IN ALL FRANKNESS THAT IT IS DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND YOUR PREOCCUPATION WITH BRITISH AND FRENCH STRATEGIC WEAPONS. THEY REPRESENT A TINY FRACTION OF YOURS. (THE BRITISH DETERRENT IS LESS THAN 3 PER CENT OF THE SIZE OF YOUR STRATEGIC MISSILE AND BOMBER FORCE). THEY CAN HAVE NO SIGNIFICANT EFFECT ON THE OVERALL BALANCE OF NUCLEAR FORCES BETWEEN EAST AND WEST. THEY ARE WEAPONS OF LAST RESORT; OUR ULTIMATE NATIONAL DETERRENTS. THEY ARE IN NO SENSE COMPARABLE TO YOUR SS20 FORCE. BUT IT IS WORTH ADDING THAT WE ARE NOT TRYING TO CLAIM THAT BRITISH NUCLEAR WEAPONS SHOULD NEVER BE THE SUBJECT OF ANY ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS. I REPEAT WHAT I HAVE SAID PUBLICLY BEFORE: IF THE SOVIET UNION AND THE US SUCCEED IN ACHIEVING IN NEGOTIATIONS ON STRATEGIC ARMS SUFFICIENTLY LARGE REDUCTIONS IN THEIR OWN ARSENALS FOR PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES TO BE ~~very~~ <sup>enormously</sup> substantially ALTERED WE ~~WILL~~ <sup>would</sup>, OF COURSE, BE PREPARED TO LOOK AT THE POSSIBILITY OF BRITISH NUCLEAR FORCES BEING INCLUDED IN THE ARMS CONTROL PROCESS. BUT THEY CAN HAVE NO PLACE IN ANY NEGOTIATIONS ABOUT INTERMEDIATE RANGE WEAPONS.

*This has further than we have for*

*... determination for our defence ... last resort*

*... although ~~that~~ our number could not be reduced because we have only the minimum required to be*

/I NOTE

*... structure ...*

I NOTE WITH DISAPPOINTMENT WHAT YOU SAY IN YOUR MESSAGE ABOUT SOVIET INTENTIONS TO TAKE "COUNTER MEASURES" FOLLOWING ANY NEW NATO DEPLOYMENTS. IF BY THIS YOU HAVE IN MIND STEPS TOWARDS INCREASING THE NUCLEAR ARMS RACE, THAT, AS YOU SAY YOURSELF, WOULD BE IN NOBODY'S INTERESTS.

FOR OUR PART, WE SHALL REMAIN COMMITTED TO THE SEARCH FOR ARMS CONTROL MEASURES WHICH ARE BALANCED AND THUS PROTECT THE SECURITY OF BOTH SIDES. IF IT IS NECESSARY FOR NATO TO BEGIN DEPLOYMENT OF THE NEW WEAPONS BY THE END OF THIS YEAR, THIS CAN BE DISCONTINUED OR REVERSED AT ANY TIME THAT AN AGREEMENT AT THE NEGOTIATING TABLE WARRANTS IT. BUT, I REPEAT, OUR HOPE REMAINS THAT THERE CAN STILL BE AN AGREEMENT THIS YEAR WHICH MAKES IT UNNECESSARY FOR NATO TO BEGIN DEPLOYMENT.

SUMMARY OF FOREIGN OFFICE NOTE

SIMILAR MESSAGES FROM ANDROPOV WERE ALSO RECEIVED BY OTHER STATIONING COUNTRIES (THE FRG, ITALY, THE NETHERLANDS AND BELGIUM) AND THE US.

NOTHING IN THE MESSAGE, NOR THE ASSOCIATED INTERVIEW, REPRESENTS A FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE IN THE SOVIET POSITION. RATHER IT IS A FURTHER STEP IN THEIR CAMPAIGN TO IDENTIFY THE EXCLUSION OF BRITISH AND FRENCH SYSTEMS AS THE MAJOR OBSTACLE TO AN INF AGREEMENT. THE DRAFT REPLY IN SIR GEOFFREY HOWE'S VIEW SHOULD THEREFORE ACKNOWLEDGE THE CONCESSION - SUCH AS IT IS - WHICH THE RUSSIANS HAVE MADE BUT AT THE SAME TIME POINTS TO THE UNREASONABLENESS OF THEIR POSITION AND REJECT THE IMPLICATION THAT WE ARE TO BLAME FOR THE FAILURE TO REACH AGREEMENT AT THE GENEVA TALKS. THE REPLY THEREFORE HAS TWO AUDIENCES: FIRST THE RUSSIANS; AND SECOND PUBLIC OPINION, SHOULD IT BE PUBLISHED. THE PRIME MINISTER MIGHT LIKE TO KNOW THAT IT IS BERNARD INGHAM'S VIEW THAT OUR REPLY SHOULD BE MADE PUBLIC.

ON THE SUBSTANCE OF THE ANDROPOV MESSAGE, THE FCO ASSESSMENT IS THAT THE COMMITMENT TO DESTROY SOME SS20s IS A NOT WHOLLY NEGLIGIBLE CONCESSION. THEY BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT THIS IS FAIRLY MEANINGLESS IN SECURITY TERMS SO LONG AS IT IS NOT ACCOMPANIED BY AN OFFER TO LIMIT THE NUMBER OF NEW MISSILES IN SOVIET ASIA. *Verification*

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THE FCO BELIEVE THAT THERE IS ONE POSSIBLE SIGNAL IN ANDROPOV'S MESSAGE OF FUTURE SOVIET TACTICS. THERE ARE REFERENCES TO THE PRESENT TALKS BECOMING "MEANINGLESS" AFTER NATO DEPLOYS INF; AND TO AN AGREEMENT BEING POSSIBLE BEFORE DEPLOYMENT BUT, IMPLICITLY, NOT AFTERWARDS. THE FCO ASSESSMENT OF THIS IS THAT WE CAN EXPECT TO SEE THE EXPLICIT THREAT BY THE RUSSIANS TO DISCONTINUE ALL DISCUSSION ON INF PERHAPS COUPLED WITH A THREAT TO WALK OUT OF THE START TALKS.

/ON THE

ON THE TIMING OF A REPLY THE FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH SECRETARY SUGGESTS THAT WE OUGHT FIRST TO CONSULT ALLIES WITH THE PURPOSE OF ENSURING CONSISTENCY AND OF STIFFENING THE RESPONSES OF OTHERS. AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THIS WILL TAKE PLACE TOMORROW AT THE SENIOR OFFICIALS GROUP (THE FCG MEETING IN BRUSSELS). IF THE PRIME MINISTER AGREES OUR FCG REPRESENTATIVE WILL BE INSTRUCTED TO DESCRIBE TO THE ALLIES THE OUTLINE OF ANDROPOV'S MESSAGE AND OF THE DRAFT REPLY AND TO URGE FIRMNESS OF RESPONSE. GEOFFREY HOWE ADVISES THAT WE SHOULD REPLY SHORTLY AFTER THAT MEETING AND MAKE THE EXCHANGE PUBLIC

THE PRIME MINISTER MIGHT ALSO LIKE TO KNOW THAT PRESIDENT REAGAN IS NOW REVIEWING THE NEGOTIATING POSITION ON OUTSTANDING SECONDARY ISSUES IN THE INF TALKS. HE MAY PROPOSE SHIFTS IN THE NEGOTIATING POSITION IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS.

TIM FLESHER

1 SEPTEMBER 1983