



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

5 September 1983

*for [unclear]*INF

/ Sir Geoffrey Howe thought the Prime Minister might be interested to see the enclosed account of his meeting with the Italian, German and French Foreign Ministers in the margins of the Special Council in Brussels on 30 August. The meeting had been called at short notice by Genscher.

Several points of interest arose. It was encouraging that all three Foreign Ministers were robust on the need to maintain the deployment schedule and the need for a firm response to Andropov's messages. Particularly notable here is the new Italian Foreign Minister's firm line on the Greek proposal to postpone deployment. (There had earlier been a slight question mark in our minds over his attitude.)

/ You will note too Genscher's remarks about the problem of the exclusion of British and French systems from the negotiations. He has on several occasions recently referred publicly to the Soviet position on this issue as the major obstacle to an agreement. In his message to Gromyko on 25 August (also enclosed) he argued this point at length and in stressing firm opposition to the Soviet position stated remarkably explicitly the argument that the Germans' security depended upon observation of the unwritten understanding whereby they had foresworn their own nuclear weapons in return for protection under the American nuclear umbrella.

This sort of statement is helpful to us in as far as it underlines that the policy of exclusion is supported by the Alliance as a whole for reasons of national security interest, and that it is not simply falling in with French and British (or US) wishes. But the Germans will not do us a favour if they highlight the issue to the exclusion of all others. It is also quite clear from Genscher's remarks in Brussels that we may soon be facing a German campaign (to which some other Allies would be sympathetic) to persuade the French and ourselves to go further than we have before in defining

/when

SECRET



when and how our nuclear weapons could be fitted into the arms control process. They may well have already made this point in Washington.

I am copying this letter to Richard Mottram. Mr Heseltine might like to look at the record of the conversation in Brussels before his own forthcoming trilateral meeting with the French and German Defence Ministers.

Dear Sir,
Yours faithfully,
R B Bone

(R B Bone)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

SECRET

Submission June 2/9
Mr Fuller, Defence Dept

INF

Genscher, Andreotti, the Secretary of State and Cheysson met for almost an hour in the FRG delegation room in the margins of the Special Council in Brussels on 30 August to discuss INF. Genscher's Private Secretary and I were present. Cheysson and Andreotti were unaccompanied.

Genscher referred to the Soviet demand for UK and French systems to be included in the INF negotiations. He had written to Gromyko on 25 August to reaffirm the FRG view that UK and French systems should not be included. He thought it important to continue to say this. For its part, FRG would do so, even if it were sometimes not easy. The problem, so far as the FRG was concerned, was (i) the Social Democratic Party had adopted the Soviet line of argument, and (ii) that in public discussion in the West, the Soviet argument still met with "open ears". It was therefore essential for Paris and London to take every opportunity to explain their positions, e.g. when Gromyko passed through Paris en route to Madrid next week. Genscher said that he thought it very possible that, at a certain point, the Soviet Union might well make a move on this issue, in the sense that they might say that if the question of UK and French systems were not to be negotiated in the context of INF, the West should make clear where precisely it would be negotiated. It was important, in the FRG view, to anticipate this question and to prepare an appropriate reply. Had it been discussed in Paris or London?

Genscher said that Ambassador Ruth was in Washington on 29 and 30 August. The general assumption was that the Americans would take a decision during the course of this week on instructions for Nitze. The latter would be passing through Bonn next Sunday. The three elements which appeared to be under discussion in Washington were: (i) the position on aircraft, on which Genscher thought there were certain reservations on the UK side; (ii) the position on Pershings. The FRG believed that any deployment reductions in the West should cover both Pershings and cruise missiles proportionately (Genscher mentioned a ratio of 20%/80%); (iii) the question of regional sub-ceilings. Genscher said that the FRG had advised the Americans that, at the opening of the resumed session of negotiation in Geneva, the US should make a public declaration of the importance they attached to attaining a solution. It would be helpful, in Genscher's view, if something similar could be said at that time in Paris and London.

/Genscher

Genscher said he believed the negotiations in Geneva were by no means a lost cause. The sooner the USSR were convinced that deployment would take place, the sooner they would negotiate properly. They were still going through the motions of testing whether deployment could be prevented. The FRG for its part would stand firm on this. That was why the FRG had expressed disagreement very rapidly with the Greek proposal for a postponement. Genscher added that, in all frankness, he did not feel like discussing this point with the Greeks at the Athens PoCo meeting. If the Greek Foreign Minister brought it up, Genscher proposed to say that he did not agree with the Greek proposal, but that it was a subject for discussion in NATO. Andreotti and Cheysson agreed with this. Cheysson added that INF might, perhaps, be a suitable topic for discussion at a Gymnich type weekend, but certainly not in PoCo. The Secretary of State said that he had not yet replied to Haralambopoulos's letter but his reaction was very much the same. It was important to remain resolute on the 1979 NATO decision. Any postponement of deployment would jeopardise the chance of bringing the Russians to the negotiating table. There was general agreement with both these points.

The Secretary of State said that, as colleagues would have seen from the press, Andropov had written to Mrs Thatcher about the recent Soviet declaration of willingness to dismantle a certain number of SS20s. The letter was clearly part of an exercise in wedge driving. It was perhaps true that the Soviet proposal represented a movement in the Soviet position. But he agreed with Genscher that the Soviet objective remained the prevention of deployment in the West. It was very important for the West to concert positions carefully. Sir G Howe said he had one anxiety in particular. The Soviet Union was trying not only to influence public opinion by making proposals such as these, but also to secure a negotiating advantage without having to make concessions themselves. The West must be careful not to give anything away. This was not to say that, in the context of negotiations and at the right time, the West might not be able to consider changes on secondary issues eg perhaps on aircraft, and perhaps on regional sub-ceilings. But this could only be as part of serious negotiation. Once we were informed of results of US review of negotiating position the European allies would need to consult and react quickly.

The Secretary of State said that a reply would be prepared for Mrs Thatcher to send to Andropov. As colleagues would have seen from the press, our initial reaction to the letter was (i) that perhaps the recent Soviet proposal suggested some movement by the USSR, but (ii) it did not amount to a change of real substance.

Genscher returned to the question of how the UK and France would react if the Russians asked where discussion about the UK and French systems should be taken into account. Cheysson said that Mitterand had already made clear that if US/USSR

/negotiations

negotiations led to a very substantial reduction in nuclear arms, France might be prepared to participate in discussions which might include consideration of French systems. It might, perhaps, be useful for discussions to take place among the five nuclear powers. France had never attempted to quantify the reductions necessary in US/USSR strike power, but obviously a drastic reduction would be required, probably by at least 50%. The Secretary of State said that the Prime Minister had also made a statement to the effect that if there were a substantial change as a result of US/USSR negotiations, then the UK would be prepared to reconsider, but - like France - the UK had not attempted to quantify this, or to say where such further discussions should take place. He would not wish to comment further on this at this stage. It was, of course, important to maintain a very clear distinction between the INF talks and any possibility of discussion involving the UK and French systems. It was also important that the USSR should not be encouraged to focus on the latter point, although of course it was entirely understandable that Genscher should have written to Gromyko in the terms he had.

Andreotti said that the Italian Government had also made clear that unless the Soviet Government were prepared to negotiate seriously, the 1979 NATO decision would be maintained. He agreed that the West should be prepared for further questions from the USSR about UK and French systems. He had listened carefully to Cheysson's comments, but would only add that, in general, this whole issue needed to be handled extremely carefully. Discussion focussed on the five nuclear powers would obviously cause difficulties for Italy. Andreotti thought it likely that the USSR would make further proposals. On the Greek proposal, Andreotti had noted that one of the suggestions which had emerged from the US Senators' visit to Moscow (he was not explicit about its provenance) was that the West might entertain postponement for say two months instead of six. In the Italian view, great care was needed on this: if the Russians were offered even a couple of months, they would merely wait and expect further postponement. There was general agreement with this.

Genscher said that in any further declaration by France it would be very helpful to refer specifically to the suggestion for further discussion by the five nuclear powers. FRG had always maintained that the nuclear powers had an obligation under the NPT to negotiate nuclear arms reduction. He wished, however, to emphasise again that he thought it very probable that a situation would arise within the next few weeks in which the question of the right forum for discussion of the

/French

French and the UK systems would arise.

The Secretary of State said that the discussion had illustrated the great importance of close consultation on all these issues. It was important to be ready to make the right public responses to Soviet statements. At the same time we needed to ensure that we did nothing to jeopardise our defence and security interests. We needed to weigh carefully the balance between short term presentational points and long term security interests. There were thus, in a sense, two different objectives: we must ensure that we secured both.

Andreotti asked whether it would be right for speeches at the CSCE meeting in Madrid to include a word about an appropriate forum for further discussion of strategic problems. Cheysson said he thought not. These were problems for discussion in NATO. It might, perhaps, be possible to include a section on strategic arms in a statement at the UN General Assembly in the context of disarmament generally.

Andreotti said in conclusion that it was important for the West to concert tactics for the CDE conference in Stockholm. This was agreed. Genscher said he thought the FRG delegation were circulating a paper on this to Permanent Representatives in NATO on 30 August.

31 August 1983


(R B Bone)

cc: PS/Mr Luce
PS/Mr Rifkind
PS/PUS
Sir J Bullard
Mr Wright
WED
Mr Cartledge or