



PM/83/70

PRIME MINISTERMeeting with President Reagan: 29 September

1. I have been considering how you might tackle East/West relations at your tete-a-tete meeting with President Reagan on the morning of 29 September.
2. For obvious reasons your brief does not reflect the course of discussion during our recent meeting on 8/9 September. I think, however, it would be useful if you were able to engage the President in a longer-term look at our objectives in dealing with the Soviet Union and the sort of policies we might adopt to achieve them.
3. You might refer to your recent discussion with academics as a way of trying to get a feel for the country and its basic nature. When I saw Kadar in Budapest last week, he insisted that to understand the Soviet Union one had to understand its history: its difficult birth, the fact that it had had few peaceful years, and the feeling - which he said remains a strong one - of being threatened. Kadar was incidentally quite open about the structural and other problems of the Soviet system, and made it clear that Hungary had no time for it whatever.
4. Depending on the President's response and the time available, you could then draw on the proceedings of our recent meeting as summarised by your Private Secretary in his letter to mine of 12 September.
5. If you did decide to put thoughts on these lines to President Reagan, it might be sensible for Oliver Wright to speak at a suitable level in the White House and with insistence

/on appropriate

BT in the folder
For Thursday's briefing meeting

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See Foreign Post
Secretary's Report
(file attached)

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on appropriate discretion, to make clear the informal but rather wide-ranging sort of discussion you hoped for. I would not see this as crowding out discussion of the other topics you will wish to raise, but only as using the time you would anyway spend on East/West relations for a rather more fundamental look at the long-term issues.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'G. Howe', written in a cursive style.

(GEOFFREY HOWE)

Foreign and Commonwealth Office
19 September 1983

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USA : PM's visit to Washington 43.

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