



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

17 May 1985

Prime Minister

Yes no

Agree to
draft message from the
Foreign Secretary
George Shultz? It looks
four-square.
CDP
17/5

Dear Charles,

Message to Mr Shultz from the Foreign Secretary

You will have seen from FCO telno 95 to Vienna (attached) of 15 May that at the breakfast meeting of five Western Foreign Ministers in Vienna that morning, there was useful discussion about the handling of SDI within the Alliance in the run-up to the meeting of the NATO Ministerial Council in Lisbon on 6 and 7 June.

At the end of that discussion, the Foreign Secretary undertook at Mr Shultz's request to let him have an account of the talk that he was due to have with Gromyko later that day and also to follow up the breakfast discussion with some further thoughts on the handling of SDI at Lisbon.

Sir Geoffrey Howe believes that it is vitaly important to maintain Alliance unity on this issue, for the permanently valid reasons of preserving Western strength and because if Alliance cohesion is weakened at this juncture, there is little pressure on the Russians to make any moves at all at Geneva.

I enclose a draft of the message the Foreign Secretary proposes to send if the Prime Minister agrees.

You will see that in paragraph 8 of his draft, Sir Geoffrey Howe mentions the question of SALT constraints and the damage which would be done to confidence in Europe if the US Administration took a decision which was seen as a unilateral step leading to the unravelling of existing arms control limitations. You will also have seen from Washington telno 1588 (attached) that Sir Oliver Wright and Sir Antony Acland both believe that it is important to make this point to Mr Shultz. We will remain in close touch with the Americans about the timing of decisions on this question. We shall offer further advice if it seems likely that the Prime Minister's personal intervention will be essential.

/I am

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I am sending a copy of this letter to Richard Mottram
at the Ministry of Defence.

Yours ever,

Les Appleyard

(L V Appleyard)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

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Message to Mr Shultz from the Foreign Secretary

I promised to let you have an account of my talk in Vienna with Gromyko on 15 May and also to follow up the useful discussion we had over breakfast that morning about the handling of Alliance cohesion in the run-up to Lisbon.

First, on Gromyko, in order not to delay too long, I asked my people to give your Embassy in London a thorough oral briefing on the substance of the discussion. This was done on 17 May. But you may find it useful to have a note, enclosed with this letter, which summarises our exchanges. My own feeling was that Gromyko was showing fewer signs of wear and tear than when last we met. He was on the ball and, although typically brusque on some points, fairly low key through most of the meeting.

That said, I cannot claim that we got very far. As you had found yourself, he was completely stuck in the groove of the Geneva talks. With me he went in for some very crude wedge-driving over SDI. He returned to many of the arguments he had used in talking to you, particularly that US research was a flagrant violation of the ABM Treaty whereas Soviet research in the same field was not. I gave him suitably short shrift on all this.

I found it slightly more encouraging that he accepted the emphasis I gave to the importance of making progress on a chemical weapons ban. He suggested himself that Soviet and British experts in this field should get together for a discussion. Here too he no doubt sees some scope for trying to drive wedges, but we are aware of the pitfalls there and will be guided accordingly.

/All



All in all, I felt it was useful to have had the discussion. The important thing in present circumstances is to keep talking, even though, as you said, Soviet foreign policy remains on hold for the time being as Gorbachev concentrates on the economy and on strengthening his own position. Incidentally, I was not able to get Gromyko to commit himself to a date for his prospective visit to London. An autumn visit is still possible but he will probably be reluctant to commit himself until he sees how things are going.

Turning to the breakfast meeting, I thought it extremely useful that you moved on from your meeting with Gromyko to raise the question of support for strategic defence research in the way you did. I agree with you about the vital importance of maintaining Alliance unity, both at Lisbon and in the longer term. I believe that the four points which the Prime Minister and the President agreed at Camp David in December offer the best basis on which to do this. The communique at the end of the NATO/NPG meeting in Luxembourg reflected the four points pretty closely in a way that was suitable to that forum. It was not so easy to achieve this explicitly at the two Bonn meetings in which the French took part - the Economic Summit and the WEU.

Among their other merits, the Camp David points cover Hans-Dietrich Genscher's concern about maintaining support for deterrence. The speech you made at Austin, Texas, made this point clearly and it should be possible to find language, perhaps based on what you said there, to cover that question at Lisbon. There is also the concern we all share as well about respect for existing Treaty obligations. That was covered very plainly in the President's speech at Strasbourg which should again provide the right kind of language for Lisbon.

/There



There is another related question which is important in this context: the SALT II constraints. I hope there will be an opportunity to discuss this with you before any final decisions are taken in Washington. I believe it would make it substantially more difficult to keep the Alliance together over SDI if it looked as though existing arms control limitations were starting to unravel.

As you know, we ourselves are wholly in support of the research programme you have undertaken and have said so many times. We shall be very much behind you in trying to get the best statement of support possible at Lisbon. It was clear both from Bonn and from what Roland Dumas said to us on Wednesday morning that the French will have greater difficulties and that their problems are more than simply tactical. But we have succeeded very well in preserving allied unity on INF deployment. We need to do as well over SDI research. I shall be seeing Roland Dumas in Paris next week and in my contacts both with him and with others I will be doing my utmost to move things in the right direction.