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USA

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

21 November 1980

Contacts with the Reagan Team

You wrote to me on 19 November, in advance of Sir Nicholas Henderson's call, on this subject. The Prime Minister and the Ambassador discussed the problems in general terms.

The Prime Minister agrees about the need for the Embassy to keep in touch with the Reagan transition team (your para. 2a). She agrees that members of the Reagan team visiting Europe should be seen (your para. 2b). If they are sufficiently senior she would be happy to see them herself. She agrees that there might be advantage in sending one or more special emissaries at some point. But she also agreed with Sir N. Henderson that a decision on this should be delayed until the situation in Washington is a little clearer.

As regards a personal meeting between herself and the new President, the Prime Minister does not wish to appear over eager but would be happy to make the journey to Washington as soon as it would suit the new Administration. You will no doubt bear in mind that while in Washington the Prime Minister will wish to receive the Donovan Award: I believe that Mr. Reagan is connected with the Award committee and it would, of course, be a nice touch if the Award could be presented by the then President. We here will be suggesting to the organisers that they should get in touch direct with the Embassy in Washington.

The question of a possible quadripartite summit on the Guadeloupe model was discussed by the Prime Minister with the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary this morning.

M. O'D. B. ALEXANDER

George Walden, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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Prime Minister.

I believe that Sir N. Henderson
"has views" on the FCO suggestion
that someone from here should
accompany Mr Hunt. I do
not know what those views
are but they account for the fact
that there is no reference to the
IDea in this letter.

Hunt



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

19 November 1980

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Dear Michael,

Contacts with the Reagan Team

We agreed that I would let you have some thoughts about contacts with the Reagan team in the period between now and the inauguration and during the early months of the new Administration.

There are limits to what can be done between now and 20 January. Reagan has not yet picked his team and we have to respect the continuing responsibility until then of the outgoing Administration. This should not however preclude us from building up our contacts with members of the Reagan entourage. This could be done in a number of ways:

- a. The Embassy in Washington should continue to establish and develop the closest possible relations with the key members of the Reagan transition team and, in particular, those nominated to top positions in the White House and in the Administration (State Department, Defence, Treasury, etc).
- b. We should take advantage of any visits to Europe by members of the Reagan team to see them (if necessary by invitation) in London. Richard Allan (whom the Prime Minister saw a little time ago) and Donald Rumsfeld are expected in London on 4 December, and the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary will aim to see them. Lord Carrington will also be meeting Henry Kissinger, who plans to pass through London early next month. We will keep tabs on other visitors of potential importance, to consider whether and at what level they might be seen. We also hope to see Hal Sonnenfeldt on his way back through London after a trip to Moscow with the US United Nations Association. (This visit was timed by the Russians to take place in the immediate aftermath of the presidential elections.)
- c. There might be advantage in sending one or more special emissaries to Washington between now and 20 January. It would not be appropriate to suggest visits by senior Cabinet Ministers. There would not, however, be the same objection to a visit of two or three days by, say, Mr Hurd for informal contacts with Reagan's advisers. We would need to find some modest 'cover' for such a visit, but this would not be difficult.

/We need



We need also to consider a programme of contacts for the early months of the new Administration. The Prime Minister will no doubt wish to have a personal meeting with Reagan within the first two or three months of his Presidency. I believe she may be thinking in terms of early March: but there is some reason to believe that Reagan himself hopes she will be his first visitor from Europe. If this is agreed in principle, Sir Nicholas Henderson could float the idea at an appropriate opportunity. Apart from this, and in addition to the normal contacts that would be developed through the Embassy, there would be advantage in arranging a fairly early quadripartite meeting at Foreign Minister level (prepared as usual by meetings of the four Political Directors). The new Administration is unlikely however to be ready for such meetings much before mid-February (Political Directors) and end-February (Foreign Ministers). Nor do we know what will be Mr Reagan's attitude to the protests of those, notably the Italians, who either resent being excluded from these quadripartite meetings or else disapprove of them altogether.

Our present thinking is thus:

a. Before the inauguration

A steady and progressive thickening of relations with all elements of the Reagan team, here and in Washington, perhaps including visits to the United States by one or more special emissaries.

b. After the inauguration

An early personal meeting between the Prime Minister and Mr Reagan; and also, if he is willing, a developing series of quadripartite meetings progressing from the Political Directors through a quadripartite Foreign Ministers' meeting to a possible meeting of the four Heads of Government on the model of Guadeloupe.

The Prime Minister will no doubt wish to discuss these suggestions, which we have shown Sir Nicholas Henderson, with him when he calls at 6 pm on 20 November.

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(G G H Walden)
Private Secretary

M O'D B Alexander Esq
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19 NOV 1980

