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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

TELEPHONE 01-218 9000
DIRECT DIALLING 01-218 2111/3

MO 14/10

6th August 1982

Dear Casp.

I greatly appreciated the nature of your personal message on the subject of the gas pipeline, and I know how strongly you feel about this subject.

All my instincts and wishes are similar to yours in opposing trade that directly assists the Soviet defence effort. But whether or not this is true of the pipeline, your efforts to block or delay it risk a greater gain to the Soviets - as a result of a deep rift in the Alliance - than the large but lesser gain to the Soviets of allowing the deal to go ahead.

I am sure that you must be aware of how people feel here about the commercial integrity implied in a licence arrangement. The West needs US technology but it can hardly rely on it, if it is to be subject to last minute political intervention, albeit for the most desirable strategic objectives. You must understand how people - however mistakenly - contrast US action in this instance with your actions over grain. It is impossibly difficult to impose sanctions on grain but, if such sanctions were successful, the Soviet defence effort would be massively hit.

After all the assistance and goodwill that I have received from you personally - and our country has received from the US - it would be my genuine wish to give you the backing you desire.

The Honorable Caspar Weinberger

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But the greatest service I can give you is my judgement. And my judgement is that you will not be able to stop this deal. I advise you against attempting it. You can certainly delay it - but only at great cost to the Alliance.

*Yours ever
John*

John Nott

1 SEP 1982

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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

Telephone 01-218 2111/3 (Direct Dialling)

01-218 9000 (Switchboard)

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MO 14/10

31st August 1982

Dear John,

SOVIET PIPELINE

You wrote to me on 2nd August about the message from Mr Weinberger to Mr Nott about the Soviet pipeline. I am sorry that, in my absence on leave, you have not had a reply and I am now attaching a copy of Mr Nott's response to Mr Weinberger of 6th August which, as you will see, met the Prime Minister's point.

A copy goes to Francis Richards (FCO).

Yours ever,

Richard Mottram

(R C MOTTRAM)

A J Coles Esq

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