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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

18 January 1984

Type manuscript.
A. J. C. 15/1

Dear John,

President Reagan's Message to the Prime Minister:
US/Soviet Relations

I enclose a draft on which the Prime Minister may wish to draw in reply to President Reagan's letter to her of 14 January about his speech of 16 January on US/Soviet relations.

Amis over.
[Signature]

(B J P Fall)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

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DRAFT: minute/letter/teletype/letter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:

Reference

The Prime Minister

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Your Reference

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

President Reagan

Copies to:

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT:

.....In Confidence

CAVEAT.....

Thank you for your letter of 14 January and the advance ^{copy} ~~preview~~ of your speech on US/Soviet relations which George Shultz ~~was able to give us~~ ^{gave me} on 15 January.

If I may say so, I thought you struck exactly the right note and at the right time. ~~[I welcomed it publicly in the House of Commons on 17 January.]~~ As we enter 1984, and against the background of ~~some~~ public disquiet at the Soviet interruption of the arms control talks in Geneva and Vienna, it was right and necessary to put on record your willingness to establish a constructive and realistic working relationship with the Soviet Union.

As you say, this is a long-term policy. We can not expect rapid changes. The Soviet system is too rigid for that as their initial public response ^{to your speech} has demonstrated. But I am sure that it is right to try: and that the best way is to engage the Soviet Union in a dialogue on a broad range of questions ^{and} bilateral, regional, economic, ^{political and} as well as ~~arms control~~ ^{arms control issues.} ~~Against this background it may be easier to make progress on~~

~~I attach great importance to guarding~~ ^{We have} against the risk of misunderstanding, ~~This is particularly necessary,~~

~~/given~~

Enclosures—flag(s).....

~~given the uncertain state of the leadership in Moscow. I~~
~~too have been stressing the need for communication in my~~
~~recent public statements. This is something we need to~~
~~maintain on a consistent basis. I look forward to hearing~~
~~how George Shultz gets on with Gromyko on 18 January. Geoffrey~~
~~Howe will be meeting Gromyko on 19 January. I will let you~~
~~have my impressions of my visit to Budapest from 2-4 February.~~

Finally, my views on the arms control ~~process~~ ^{problem} are very
 much in line with yours. I warmly welcome the confirmation
 of your aims ^{to reduce} of ~~reductions in nuclear arsenals,~~ ^{and to} the creation
 of greater stability, ^{and to} ~~the establishment of confidence.~~ ^{confidence}
~~As for the immediate future,~~ ^{As for} it would obviously be wrong to
 make concessions just to get the Russians back to the negotiating
 table. But they clearly have problems of their own, both of
 substance and of presentation. Thanks to your own imaginative
 proposals, and to the unity we have been able to maintain within
 the Alliance, the initiative rests with the West. ~~I believe~~
~~that now~~ ^{we now} we have an opportunity to ~~think through our positions~~
~~further and to consider whether there are any new thoughts we~~
~~can develop, particularly on possible ways forward on nuclear~~
~~arms reductions. I welcome the fact that this process is~~
~~already getting under way in the various consultative groupings~~
~~within the Alliance.~~ ^{are beginning to discuss the possibility} We must maintain the momentum. We must
 not only convince our own peoples of our dedication to the
 pursuit of real reductions, but ^{also} ~~seek~~ ^{also} that greater stability
 of which you spoke.

~~I look forward to keeping in close touch on these~~
~~important questions. I am sure~~ ^{hope} that your speech ^{will} ~~can~~ mark the
 beginning of a new phase of relations with the Soviet Union.
~~That depends on them more than us. But in the Alliance~~ ^{I will}

we can all seek to build on the lead you have taken
~~I hope that all of us can build on it with realism,,
patience and imagination.~~

I look forward to hearing the outcome of
George Shultz's meeting with Frank on 15 January.
Folker House will be meeting Frank on 19 January.
I shall let you have my impressions of my visit to
Huyghe for 2 to 4 February.

USA
Via St. Louis
Main 82

