

CONFIDENTIAL



Prime Minister

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

15 January 1986

You just need to be aware of this for the time being. Fuller analysis will follow.

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Dear Charles,

I think its the Soviets taking the propaganda offensive at the re-opening of Geneva negotiations. Everything is made to depend on the US giving up the SDI

Gorbachev Message to the Prime Minister about Disarmament

CDP 15/1

The Soviet Ambassador called on Mr Renton today to deliver a message from Mr Gorbachev to the Prime Minister.

Mr Popov explained that the message contained a far reaching 15 year plan of phased nuclear disarmament, ending in the total abolition of nuclear weapons by the end of the century. It also stated that the Soviet Union had decided to prolong the moratorium on nuclear tests by 3 months, and contained other proposals on arms control and disarmament.

Mr Renton declined to make immediate comment on so extensive a series of proposals, but undertook to ensure that the message reached the Prime Minister without delay.

I enclose a translation of the message provided by the Soviet Embassy, together with a short list of the main points. We shall send you initial on the proposals as soon as we can. The Foreign Secretary will wish to consider further advice shortly thereafter on the substance of the proposals.

Mr Popov said he believed the proposals would also have been put to at least the other nuclear powers. It is probable that Mr Gorbachev's proposals will be put forward at the Geneva negotiations, which re-open tomorrow.

The proposals are already public, Gorbachev having referred to them on Soviet television (though not to his having sent the Prime Minister or anyone else a special message). Our News Department are taking the following line:

"These appear to be wide-ranging proposals which will require full and careful study. [We have received the full text in a message from Mr Gorbachev to the Prime Minister.]"

If you have no objection they will add the sentence in square brackets.

I am copying this letter to Michael Stark in the Cabinet Office, and Richard Mottram in the MOD.

Yours ever,
Colin Budd

(C R Budd)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
PS/10 Downing Street



MR GORBACHEV'S PROPOSALS

Nuclear Weapons

Three phase programme for complete abolition of nuclear weapons by 1999. Beginning with reduction of US and Soviet nuclear weapons capable of reaching each other's territory and elimination of medium range ballistic and cruise missiles in Europe. These reductions, which would be contingent on agreement not to create, test or deploy "strike space weapons", would lead to the involvement of all nuclear weapons states in nuclear arms control negotiations and further US and Soviet reductions, including all shorter range weapons.

Nuclear Testing

Three month extension of Soviet moratorium which expired at the end of 1985. Proposal for US to follow suit, leading to agreement on permanent ban on testing.

British Government to reconsider position on testing particularly in light of Soviet assurances on verification.

Comprehensive Test Ban

Immediate resumption of trilateral talks in January 1986, and, in parallel, participation of other nuclear powers through Committee on Disarmament at Geneva.

SDI

US agreement not to create, test or deploy space strike weapons, leading subsequently to universal ban and agreement not to develop non-nuclear weapons based on new physical principles.

UK to reconsider participation.

Chemical Weapons

Soviet Union prepared to work for complete elimination.



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Could provide opportunity for move towards reductions in conventional weapons and forces.

Verification

Soviet willingness to contemplate on site inspection of nuclear arms reductions, testing and chemical weapons, and "open laboratories".

Regional Conflicts

Disarmament not to be made contingent on resolution of regional conflicts, though Soviet Union committed to their early elimination "on just principles".