



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

1 October 1986

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Dear Charles,

Conference on Disarmament in Europe

I fear that the Foreign Secretary's minute of 29 September contained a typing error. The threshold for notification of amphibious or airborne activities (paragraph 2(b) was inflated tenfold by the addition of a nought; the offending sentence should have read "more than 3000 troops".

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries of all members of OD and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

Yours ever,

Colin Budd

(C R Budd)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
No 10 Downing St

DEFENCE Arms Control PTA.





PM/86/063

PRIME MINISTER

Conference on Disarmament in Europe (CDE)

1. You and other OD colleagues may wish to have a brief assessment of the agreement reached at Stockholm on 21 September.

2. The agreement is not a treaty with legal force. But it involves a political commitment on the part of the 35 participants - all European states bar Albania plus Canada and the United States - to implement with effect from 1 January 1987 the following measures:

- (a) Notification, 42 days in advance, of military activities in Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals which involve at least 13,000 troops or 300 battle tanks. Associated air activity will also be notified if it involves 200 or more sorties by aircraft;
- (b) Notification of amphibious or airborne military activities involving more than 30,000 troops;
- (c) The invitation of military observers from all the participating states to military activities involving more than 17,000 men. In the case of amphibious or airborne activities this threshold is set at 5,000 men;

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Prime Minister

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- (d) The exchange in November each year of annual calendars forecasting those military activities expected to take place during the following year which will be subject to prior notification;
- (e) Inclusion in the annual calendar two years in advance of military activities involving more than 40,000 troops, together with an undertaking not to conduct activities of more than 75,000 troops unless they have been included in the current calendar;
- (f) Inspection arrangements giving each participating state the right to conduct inspections on the territory of other participating states should there be doubts about compliance. Such inspection can be conducted by air, on the ground or by a combination of air and ground inspection. This is qualified by provisions permitting the exclusion of particularly sensitive areas such as defence establishments and by stipulations that no state need accept more than three inspections per year on its territory and that no state may inspect any other individual state more than once a year.

In addition the participants reaffirmed, in language taken mainly from the Helsinki Final Act and the UN Charter their commitment on the non-use of force.



3. The Stockholm agreement is an important contribution towards greater transparency and predictability about military activities in Europe, which the West has always insisted must be the precondition for measures of real disarmament. It is the first major arms control accord since SALT II in 1979. It represents an advance on the measures in the Helsinki Final Act of 1975, in that it applies to military activities at a significantly lower level, it is markedly more specific and detailed and it entails a firmer degree of commitment. Above all, it is the first multilateral arms control agreement to provide for verification through on-site inspection by land, air or both. Moreover, because the Stockholm agreement confirms the decision at the Madrid CSCE Review Meeting in 1983 that the zone of application should extend from the Atlantic to the Urals, it ensures that these measures will apply to military activity on the whole of the territory of European Russia.

4. In order to obtain agreement compromises had to be made and not all the original Western objectives were realised. In particular, we would have liked to see arrangements for the provision of more information about the normal peacetime dispositions of major units of armed forces. Nonetheless the outcome at Stockholm reflects the Western approach to confidence and security building, ie practical measures rather than the Warsaw Pact's declaratory approach. Much of the substance of NATO's original proposals has been preserved with only a limited acknowledgement of Warsaw Pact demands for constraints on the size of military exercises and no reference at all to their demands for notification of naval activities.



5. The agreement establishes clear and detailed provisions for on-site inspection and is thus of wider arms control significance. Much will of course depend on the way in which it is implemented. But it demonstrates that the Soviet Union is prepared to give substance to their declared willingness to accept on-site verification procedures. It remains to be seen however whether they are prepared to accept the more stringent inspection regime which would be required for reductions, rather than confidence building.

6. At the more political level the document adopted at Stockholm demonstrates, not least to a sometimes sceptical Western public, that East and West can reach agreement on arms control. Taken with the encouraging noises emerging from recent US/Soviet contacts about progress on nuclear arms control matters, it will improve the prospects for a US/Soviet Summit, though this will continue to be subject to the uncertainties generated by the Daniloff affair. The agreement at Stockholm will also provide an impetus for the Vienna CSCE Review Meeting which opens in November. At that meeting the West will press for parallel progress on other areas of the CSCE agenda, notably human rights. But we shall also need to retain the initiative as regards the pursuit of further measures



of arms control in Europe. George Younger and I are in touch about ways in which the UK might contribute in this area.

7. I am copying this minute to members of OD and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'G. Howe', written in a cursive style.

(GEOFFREY HOWE)

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

29 September 1986