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PRIME MINISTER

MESSAGE FROM CHARLES POWELL

I have spoken at length to General Scowcroft in Rome. He was not aware of the Secretary-General's text. I told him of its major failings in our eyes. We had difficulty enough with the American text, and really could not accept that the position be further eroded. I told him of General Galvin's statement with which we very much agreed.

Scowcroft said that the President had sent a further message to Chancellor Kohl yesterday. The gist of this was that the American proposal on conventional forces reductions brought the prospect of agreement in Vienna closer, and could therefore also shorten the timescale within which SNF negotiations might begin. They now looked to Kohl to do them a favour by accepting the American text on SNF. They had not yet had a reply.

I said that we really needed to be sure that the American text was the bottom line. If we could be sure of that, then I thought you might at the end of the day accept it - but no further and definitely not the Secretary-General's text. Scowcroft said he would report to the President.

I have told the Foreign Secretary that he ought to contact Jim Baker as soon as he arrives in Brussels this evening and speak in the same terms.

28 May 1989