

PRIME MINISTER

BILATERAL WITH THE FOREIGN SECRETARY

You have a bilateral with the Foreign Secretary tomorrow afternoon.

(i) Foreign Secretary's Visit to the Soviet Union
This will be the main subject he wants to discuss. You will have seen the telegrams reporting his meetings with Mr. Gorbachev and Mr. Shevardnadze. It seems to have been a workmanlike visit, with no surprises. Indeed, Gorbachev was very true to form, pocketing our support for his internal policies, and attacking us for criticising his external policies. He was tetchy on human rights. He still clearly attaches great importance to his personal relationship with you. He has renewed his commitment to visit the UK, but has not set a date.

The other noticeable aspect is how it is the Soviet side who are always advancing proposals and/or criticisms of us, while we seem to be on the defensive.

(ii) Afghanistan.
I have minuted you separately on this. You take the view that we should not try to sustain the link between Soviet withdrawal and creation of an interim government, although we should make sure that we do not get into a situation where we suspend our aid to the Resistance while the Russians go on aiding the regime. You will want to register your views with the Foreign Secretary.

(iii) European Council
The outcome was received quite well by the Press, and you had no trouble in the House. Teddy Taylor is clearly gathering his forces, and will harry the Government over the next few months, as the legal instruments are being drawn up. The odds must be that the French will allow themselves to be overruled

at the Foreign Affairs Council on 22 February. Indeed that is now clear from the telegrams. But the Foreign Secretary will need to watch very carefully to make sure there is no behind-the-scenes deal between the French and Germans.

(iv) NATO

You will want to give him your impression from your visit to NATO and SHAPE. In general you were not very impressed with either of them as an organisation. You are also quite worried about the prospects for the Summit. General Galvin left you in no doubt that he wants clear instructions from the Summit on modernisation (or whatever one has to call it) of NATO's nuclear forces and on conventional arms control. But the Germans are evidently being difficult; and there is a risk that the smaller members like Denmark, Greece, Norway will not subscribe to a strong statement on deterrence and modernisation. A quarrelsome meeting would be the worst possible outcome. We need a really effective lobbying campaign before the Council in favour of a strong Declaration which must be agreed in advance. There may be a case for messages from you (and for me to go to see Teltschik).

(v) Southern Africa

You will be seeing the South African Ambassador on Friday to receive President Botha's reply to your recent message. You may also want to let the Foreign Secretary know that you are still not satisfied about the position over UNITA, and also to pursue the question of raising the level of our contacts with them.

C.D.?

CDP

17 February, 1988.