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PRIME MINISTERBILATERAL WITH THE FOREIGN SECRETARY,23 MARCH 1989

I understand the Foreign Secretary wants to raise the following subjects:

- SNF Modernisation

Kohl's domestic political position continues to weaken (the latest poll puts his standing lower than ever) and one has to assume that the prospects of getting him to take a sensible decision on SNF are diminishing. German statements about the unfairness of pressing them too hard are becoming more shrill. Sir Robin Butler's visit to Washington suggests that the Americans are divided, with the White House still strongly supportive of your line on modernisation but the State Department worried about leaning too hard on Kohl. We should certainly not give up. Much rests on your meeting with Kohl at the end of April. But we may in the end have to settle for a formula which is a lot less specific than we want.

- Commonwealth Secretary General

The Foreign Secretary has written to you about this. He appears to think that Malcolm Fraser's prospects are improving rapidly and Anayoku's support is not very firm. He suggests that you should tell President Babangida that we shall not oppose Anayoku. I am not sure this is wise if our real position is to encourage Ramphal to stay on for a while. You will remember that this option seemed to appeal to Brian Mulroney. You may want to urge the Foreign Secretary to give more weight to the Ramphal option. Our line with others should continue to be that we shall not make up our minds until we know for sure who all the candidates are.

- Visit to Southern Africa

We have not yet heard from the South Africans their formal reaction to the possibility of your visiting Namibia. When Pik Botha discussed it with Robin Renwick he was considerably more up-beat than in his talk with you. He is now consulting President Botha. Meanwhile, we have a carefully prepared contingency plan for going if you take the decision to do so.

- The Foreign Secretary's Visit to the Sub Continent

He wants to tell you about his own visit immediately after Easter to India and Pakistan. He has had to curtail his programme in Pakistan because of the Rushdie affair.

- Iran

I think he wants to bring you up-to-date on what our European allies are doing about returning their Ambassadors to Tehran.

- Mr. Gorbachev's Visit

I have sent the Foreign Office a copy of the note which I did for you about the talks, together with the points which emerged from your discussion with me and Percy Cradock. I hope the briefs will now be tailored to this. Meanwhile, the programme is now more or less finalised and the Russians seem well content.

- Lockerbie

He wants to discuss our attitude to possible American retaliation for Lockerbie against the PFLP-GC in Lebanon (see attached note by Percy Cradock). We surely cannot be less than supportive, although I am sceptical as to the effectiveness of any action in Lebanon. The first and more useful step would be for the US to break diplomatic relations with Syria, which harbours the PFLP-GC.

C.D.R

CHARLES POWELL

22 March 1989