



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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h-a.*

INF: Romanian Initiative

The Prime Minister might be interested in an analysis of the messages which President Ceausescu of Romania has sent to Western leaders on INF.

On 5 November HM Ambassador, along with some of his NATO colleagues, was summoned by the Romanian Foreign Minister and asked to convey a message from President Ceausescu to Mrs Thatcher. Ceausescu had sent proposals to President Reagan and Andropov which he now wished to pass to other NATO allies. These were that:

- (a) in exchange for non-deployment of new NATO missiles, the Soviet Union should destroy its SS20s;
- (b) French and British missiles should not be included in the calculation of the balance of forces in Europe at this stage, but should be taken into consideration when negotiations took place on the wider question of nuclear disarmament;
- (c) a meeting of NATO and Warsaw Pact Foreign Ministers should be held;
- (d) a US-Soviet summit should also be considered;
- (e) at the very least, negotiations at Geneva should not be broken off.

By 8 November Ceausescu had sent a letter to Chancellor Kohl. This appears to contain significant differences compared to that passed orally to HM Ambassador. The main points in it were: that the West should abandon deployment or delay it until 1984 while negotiations continued and that the Russians should destroy 'the greater part' of their SS20s. The wording of Ceausescu's message to President Reagan was:

'It is essential to reach agreement providing for the halting of deployment of new US missiles and for the withdrawal and destruction in totality or in the greatest part of Soviet missiles'.

It is clear from accounts of what other allies have received that the Romanians are sending different signals. The obfuscation is probably intentional.



The important point which is clear from the messages is the exclusion of British and French systems from the INF negotiations.

In judging how much weight to place on what the Romanians are up to we need to assess whether they are playing their customary role in the Warsaw Pact or whether they are in fact acting as stalking horse for the Russians. Moscow telno 1283 of 10 November (enclosed) addressed this in detail. A final assessment must await analysis of a possible new Soviet negotiating move of which details are just beginning to emerge from Geneva; at first sight it seems to have something in common with the Romanian proposals.

Our public line so far has been:

- (a) to note that at long last a Warsaw Pact country has recognised that there can be no place in the INF negotiations for British and French systems; but
- (b) there can be no question of delaying INF deployment beyond the end of this year unless the Russians agree to the zero option;
- (c) we will continue to pursue a negotiated settlement after first deployments.

There is some mileage in underlining point (a) above, although the arguments on why British and French systems should be excluded from the INF negotiations are widely accepted, and we need to take care to avoid emphasis being placed on the second barrel of the Romanian argument; viz that a place be found for them in subsequent disarmament negotiations.

As we understand it the Prime Minister has not received any written confirmation of Ceausescu's message, and, unless she does so we would propose to give the Romanians a brief oral response on the lines above.

I am copying this letter to Richard Mottram (MOD).

(R B Bone)
Private Secretary

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