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Foreign and Commonwealth Office



London SW1A 2AH

Since 1977 - we have had Afghanistan - Poland. Under those circumstances I do not believe we should send a message to the new Soviet President?

22 November, 1982

Prime Minister!

Do you agree to send a message to the new Soviet President?

Possible Message to the New Soviet President

A 22/11

It is expected that the Supreme Soviet meeting on 23 November will elect a new Soviet President in succession to Mr Brezhnev. One possibility is that Mr Andropov himself will assume the Presidency in addition to the post of General-Secretary of the Party, thus putting himself in the same position which Mr Brezhnev occupied from 1977 until his death. Other possible candidates are Mr Andropov's defeated rival for the post of General Secretary, Mr Chernenko; the Foreign Minister, Mr Gromyko; or conceivably the present Prime Minister, Mr Tikhonov.

We have been considering whether The Queen should be advised to send a message of congratulation. No such message was sent to Mr Brezhnev when he became President in 1960 (on that occasion he occupied the post until 1964), nor to Mr Mikoyan in 1964, nor to Mr Podgorny in 1965. However, The Queen did send a message to Mr Brezhnev when he became President in 1977. The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary believes that it is this last precedent which should be followed both because this is the most recent precedent and because we wish to signal to the new Soviet leaders that a more constructive East/West relationship is available if they are willing to adopt a new approach.

We expect that most if not all of our Allies and partners will send messages; we are checking further on this point.

The text of the message which Mr Pym proposes should be recommended to Her Majesty is as follows:

'On the occasion of your assumption of the office of Chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, I send you my congratulations and my best wishes to you and to the people of the Soviet Union'.

I should be grateful to know whether the Prime Minister agrees.

*Yours ever
R B Bone*

A J Coles Esq
Private Secretary
10 Downing Street

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Private Secretary

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22 NOV 1982

Foreign and Commonwealth Office
London SW1P 3RT



PRIME MINISTER

POSSIBLE MESSAGE TO THE NEW SOVIET PRESIDENT

I wonder if I could ask you to look at this again.

I should be surprised if Presidents Reagan, Carstens and Mitterrand (or, indeed, any Western Head of State) do not send a message of congratulations to the new Soviet President. It is really the minimum requirement in the case of a State with which one has diplomatic relations.

If The Queen does not send one, the omission will be conspicuous and could involve her in some controversy. Many people may feel that nothing is to be gained by deliberately withholding a formal message of this kind. Had we broken off diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union over Afghanistan or Poland, it would clearly be right not to send a message. But we did not go that far.

I do not think that the message need be so warm as that recommended by the FCO.

My suggestion is that provided Presidents Reagan, Carstens and Mitterrand send a message, The Queen should be advised to send the following:

"I send you my congratulations on the occasion of your assumption of the office of Chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet".

Agree? Yes not

A.J.C.

23 November 1982

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

24 November 1982

POSSIBLE MESSAGE TO THE NEW SOVIET PRESIDENT

Thank you for your letter of 22 November.

The Prime Minister considers that, provided the Presidents of the United States, the Federal Republic of Germany and France send a message to the new Soviet President, The Queen should be advised to send a message in the following terms:

"I send you my congratulations on the occasion of your assumption of the office of Chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet".

A. J. COLES

Roger Bone, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Soviet Union



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

30 November, 1982

John Doe

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Possible Messages to New Soviet President

Thank you for your letter of 24 November. As you may meanwhile have learned, the post of President (Chairman of the Supreme Soviet) was not after all filled during the recent Supreme Soviet meeting.

In consultations with our Allies and our partners in the Ten, we learnt that recommendations to send a message of congratulation were to be put to the Presidents of the United States, France, Italy, the Federal Republic of Germany, and Ireland and to the Grand Duke of Luxembourg, The Queen of Denmark and The Queen of the Netherlands.

We need not of course take any further action at present, but will be guided by your letter when a new President is finally elected.

Your own

R B Bone

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