

le ①



PM/85/38

PRIME MINISTER

Time Minute
 The main question is whether the Ambassador should attend the military parade (like the French) rather than stay away (like the Americans). There are quite good reasons for attending, provided we explain ourselves carefully to the Americans. Agree? Agree also message to Gorbachev?

I should shorten it as it is too long

VE Day : Representation in Moscow

1. On 2 April I minuted about representation in Moscow at the Soviet commemorations of VE Day which are to be held on 8/9 May.
2. Since my minute we have received a formal invitation from the Russians to send a small delegation of two or three people to Moscow. We have also a clearer idea of the events to which we are being invited and have discussed these with our allies and partners, in particular the French and Americans.
3. The main change is that the French have now decided that they should be represented at all the events in Moscow, including a military parade, by their Ambassador. We understand that the Ambassador will be accompanied at the parade by a French veteran from the Normandy-Nieman Air Squadron which fought with the Russians during the war. The Americans, on the other hand, have decided that they will not be represented at a parade in Moscow, although their Ambassador will probably represent them at other events. They have so informed the Russians (before our consultations with them were completed). There has also been a discernible diminution in the Soviet propaganda attacks on alleged revanchist and militarist tendencies in the FRG.
4. Against that background, I would propose that we should be represented in Moscow on the following basis:
 - (a) Sir Iain Sutherland should lay a wreath on 8 May at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Moscow, 'on behalf of the British Government and people to commemorate

/ the



the 40th Anniversary of the end of the Second World War', (ie in line with our own commemoration). He would be accompanied by his Defence Attaché. The French and Americans have not yet decided whether to lay national wreaths but it is likely that they will.

- (b) Sir Iain Sutherland should be given discretion to attend a meeting in the Kremlin Palace of Congresses (for a speech by Mr Gorbachev). The Americans (and some of our other NATO allies) may decide not to attend unless the Russians tell them beforehand what will be in the speech. I doubt if this is realistic.
- (c) Sir Iain Sutherland should attend the military parade together with the Secretary and the National Vice Chairman of the Royal British Legion (who have been invited separately and who will be going independently and in a non-official capacity). This is different from our normal policy of not being represented at military parades in Moscow since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, at above the level of Counsellor/ Assistant Military Attaché. This parade is of course commemorating an allied victory in the last war and therefore does not need to create a precedent for our post-Afghanistan policy. Apart from the French, the Australians and Norwegians have told us that they will be represented by their Ambassadors at the parade. The Canadians will be represented by a Counsellor in the absence of their Ambassador.
- (d) Sir Iain Sutherland should attend a reception following the parade.
- (e) In addition, Sir Iain Sutherland or the Assistant Naval Attaché should lay a wreath at the memorial in Murmansk commemorating wartime cooperation among the allies. (We laid a wreath there in 1975 and the US Ambassador intends to lay a wreath there on this occasion.)

/ Given



5. Given the positions adopted by the French and Americans, allied unity is not possible. I think, however, it would be better for the three Western Wartime Allies if we could adopt two, and not three, different positions. The Americans are something of a special case at the moment since they are still in dispute with the Russians over the shooting of Major Nicholson (which caused them to withdraw official representation from the Elbe Reunion celebrations). They therefore have a particular reason for not attending the parade. For us to join the Americans rather than the French would prolong the present cool period through which Anglo-Soviet relations are passing after the expulsions; and representation by our Ambassador at all the Soviet events would correspond with the fact that we are inviting Ambassadors to our corresponding ceremony in London. It is nevertheless important that we should explain our position to the Americans very carefully before we speak to the Russians. If necessary, I would propose to go over the ground personally with George Shultz and the other Foreign Ministers concerned at the Bonn Economic Summit on 2 May to ensure that our public presentation plays down differences between the US, the French and ourselves.

6. There is in addition the question of an exchange of messages. We have agreed with the French and Americans that it would be desirable for such exchanges to take place, although the Americans may try (unrealistically, I suspect) to insist on seeing in advance the text of the Soviet message to them. I / attach a draft of a message which, subject to your views, you might send. We would tell the Russians that we proposed, as in 1975, for the exchange to be between yourself and the General Secretary. Their recent practice has, however, varied and they may say that the messages should be between yourself and the Soviet Government or Leadership. It would be desirable to get our position vis-à-vis the Russians on the 40th

/ Anniversary



Anniversary on public record and hopefully also published in their press. We will tell the Russians that the exchange should take place on 8 May.

7. If you are content with the above, I would propose that we should inform the Russians of our decision on 3 May, having checked previously with the US and French. We would publicise our decision on the same day.

8. I am sending copies of this minute to the Defence Secretary and Sir Robert Armstrong.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'G. Howe'.

(GEOFFREY HOWE)

Foreign and Commonwealth Office
30 April 1985

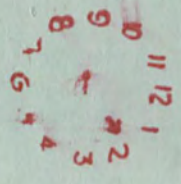


DRAFT MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO MR GORBACHEV

On this 40th Anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe, it is right that we should look back and pay tribute with pride and thankfulness for the herosim of those in both our countries who fought in a common cause, and with grief for the terrible sufferings involved. We in Britain rededicate ourselves on this occasion to the values of freedom with justice for which victory was won.

[We are glad to commemorate 40 years of peace, reconstruction in our countries, and reconciliation in Europe. At the same time we recognise the tragic nature of the divisions and conflicts which persist in our continent and beyond.] The experience of these 40 years points to the vital importance of our efforts to work patiently and realistically for better understanding and cooperation between our two countries and peoples, acknowledging our mutual desire for security and lasting peace.

DEFENCE: VE Day
Oct 84



30 APR 1985

CONFIDENTIAL



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

LA KLB
L02 ADM
efi P Crook
1 May 1985

VE DAY: REPRESENTATION IN MOSCOW

The Prime Minister has considered the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary's minute of 30 April conveying his proposals for our representation at Soviet commemorations of VE Day in Moscow.

The Prime Minister is content with what is proposed and does not consider that the information about the intentions of the Opposition need affect the Government's decision. She is also willing to send a message to Mr. Gorbachev. I should be grateful if this could be telegraphed to Moscow.

I am copying this letter to Richard Mottram (Ministry of Defence) and to Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

CHARLES POWELL

Len Appleyard, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

CONFIDENTIAL

CP

L02 ADN

MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO MR. GORBACHEV

On this 40th Anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe, it is right that we should look back and pay tribute with pride and thankfulness for the heroism of those in both our countries who fought in a common cause, and with grief for the terrible sufferings involved. We in Britain rededicate ourselves on this occasion to the values of freedom with justice for which victory was won.

The experience of these 40 years points to the vital importance of our efforts to work patiently and realistically for better understanding and co-operation between our two countries and peoples, acknowledging our mutual desire for security and lasting peace.

May 1985



10 DOWNING STREET

Prime Minister

I have subsequently
heard that Denis Healey
and George Robertson
are going to
Moscow to attend all
or part of the
ceremonies.

You will wish to ^{No}
consider whether this should
affect the decision that the
Government should be
represented by the Ambassador.
C.D.P