

FROM: C J R MEYER, NEWS

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Private Secretary

cc: Mr Pakenham
Mr Llewellyn Smith
Mr Alston

+ Strong support
for President from NATO Allies

+ dangers of Soviet
propaganda campaign.

GENEVA SUMMIT: GORBACHEV'S PRESS CONFERENCE

1. Gorbachev made an opening statement at 10.00 am London time which lasted about an hour. The following are the main points recorded in the order in which they were made. I have not had time to record any answers to questions.

Introduction

- The importance of the Summit for bilateral and international relations would become clearer as time passed. It had taken place at a very difficult period for bilateral and international relations.
- Before the Summit there had been great expectations for a reduction of tension, which many feared had gone too far.
- The Soviet Union had no illusions about US policy: the militarisation of the US economy, of US political thinking.
- The Soviet Union believed the situation had got too dangerous and would make every effort to improve it. Thus various Soviet arms control initiatives to improve the atmosphere before the Summit.
- Though the US did not respond appropriately, the Soviet Union decided to stick to trying to change the course of events. That was why direct talks with Reagan had been necessary. In the complex international situation an enormous responsibility rested on the Soviet Union and the US.
- Moscow and Washington must learn the art of living together. Deeply convinced that both peoples want peace (long aside on need for peace, yearnings of all peoples).

- "In a nutshell" enormous responsibility of the super powers. Propaganda could not replace responsible politics. "That's my deep conviction".

Summit Talks

- The tete a tete talks had been frank, sometimes extremely sharp. But nevertheless productive to a certain degree. The two leaders had talked to each other in this way longer than expected.
- Open and frank talks over eight hours in all, tete a tete, in plenary, between experts. This effort was decisive, allowing serious work to be done.
- Reagan had been given an analysis of the world situation. The choice was not just between two social systems but between survival and destruction: that was at the centre of world politics.
- Had told Reagan that it had become very difficult to have productive dialogue on stopping the arms race. That was why the Summit had been necessary: a point had been reached when as a matter of national interest, widely defined, consideration had to be given to what to do next.
- Enormous effort put in to understanding the US position. "We tried to be responsible and unprejudiced."
- Despite all the differences that were revealed, the two sides discovered points in common which could serve as a basis for developing relations. The common point was that nuclear war could not be fought and won.
- The central problem of US/Soviet relations was security. The two sides had to strive for agreements giving equal security. This was the only way to mutual trust, further dialogue and contacts and improving the atmosphere.
- Reagan was told Soviet Union not working for superiority and that the US must not do so either. The two leaders had to discuss security at a lower level of parity on a basis of reciprocity.
- Nothing must be done to start arms race in space otherwise arms race would become irreversible. Arms race in space would make reduction of tension far less likely. Point reached where next steps in this area could be of gravest kind.

International Relations/Regional Conflicts

- [Lengthy analysis of international situation in classic Marxist/Leninist terms. Reference to Palmerston - nations don't have allies, only interests; mention that he had quoted this to Mrs Thatcher.]
- Reagan told that in the world Soviet Union not playing a double game.

Bilateral Relations and SDI

- Improvement in bilateral relations possible although backlog of problems. Reagan told that this opportunity to improve the situation must not be lost.
- Main question: war and peace, arms control. This was the basic topic of the Summit.
- The Americans had said Starwars was defensive. Soviet Union ready radically to reduce nuclear weapons on condition no arms race in space. As a first step ready to reduce by 50%; at a second stage ready for discussions with other nuclear powers.
- SDI was not defensive. The Soviet Union was being offered arms competition in space. Risk that this would get out of control; danger of accidents, false alarms in space.
- On SDI, neither side liked each other's logic. "Why should we believe your good intentions if you won't believe ours?"
- The Soviet Union was open to verification. But it objected in principle to "open laboratories" while new weapons systems were being developed. Verification should be in the context of reductions.
- Not dramatising the differences: looking for mutually acceptable solutions.
- Agreements reached on exchanges in science, culture, education, information, sports. Reference to joint initiative on nuclear fusion.

Conclusion

- Summit has had enormous political effect, has activated world opinion.
- At a watershed, turning point like this, moment of truth needed.
- A direct dialogue was the best way of clearing the air: the talk had been straight.
- Agreement that the main problem was arms control. Too complicated to be settled in two days. But better understanding now of the problems which helped create trust. Reagan's statement that he didn't want ~~confrontation~~ appreciated.
- A beginning of a dialogue to improve relations and international situation. Opportunities created for progress. Looking to the future with optimism.

Confrontation

C. J. R. Meyer,

C J R Meyer