

SECRET



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

20 March 1987

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Revised draft
submitted.

Dear Charles,

CBP
24/3

Prime Minister's Visit to Moscow:
Message to President Reagan

/ I enclose, as discussed, a draft message for the Prime Minister to send to President Reagan in the course of the next week. It may need some revision following the Prime Minister's meetings with Chancellor Kohl and President Mitterrand on 23 March.

Yours ever,

L Parker

(L Parker)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
PS/10 Downing Street

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DSR 11 (Revised Sept 85)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despach/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1 +

FROM:
PRIME MINISTER
DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

Reference
PPSAAAX

BUILDING:

ROOM NO:

Your Reference

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

TO:

Copies to:

PRESIDENT REAGAN

SUBJECT:

PRIVACY MARKING

..... In Confidence

CAVEAT

I promised earlier this month to let you have some thoughts on my visit to Moscow, which begins on 28 March. I had a useful talk with Mr Armacost after his own visit there last week.

I want to use this visit to build on the efforts we have both made to engage Gorbachev seriously in the business of maintaining the world's security, particularly through arms control and handling of regional conflicts. He may well hope to use the visit to weaken Western cohesion. I shall be looking out for such traps. Western cohesion is the strongest weapon we have and I intend to preserve it.

Enclosures flag(s)

I shall be having several hours of talks with Gorbachev in a very restricted context. I want to use these to find out :

- how serious he is about internal political and economic "restructuring".

- what impact this is likely to have on his foreign policy priorities.

- how we can encourage him to go further in opening up Soviet society to outside influence.

I hope to gain some further insight into what drives him; at the same time I shall try to get across to him a balanced view of what Western leaders and their peoples want. In particular I shall remind him that historically democratic countries have seldom, if ever, been aggressors.

I will also press him on human rights - in particular the release of dissidents, an end to the abuse of psychiatry, religious freedom, and Jewish emigration. I expect to have private meetings with a number of critics of the Soviet system, including the Sakharovs and Jewish refuseniks.

On regional issues I intend to focus on Afghanistan and the Middle East. On Afghanistan, I want to find out whether he is really willing to withdraw Soviet troops completely in the near future and allow genuine self-determination. I hope to convince him that if he is serious about this - and that of course is the crucial

question - the West will not exploit it by trying to humiliate him.

On the Middle East, I shall maintain the clear distinction between our support in principle for an international conference and the Soviet Union's position. I shall make clear that the onus now rests with the parties. I shall also probe for signs of a genuine desire on Gorbachev's part to play a constructive role in the peace process, and to show real flexibility over Soviet relations with Israel.

We shall almost inevitably spend most time on arms control. I want to try to tie Gorbachev down to accepting in practice, if not formally, the priorities which you and I identified at Camp David last November and which our NATO colleagues endorsed a few weeks later. I will press him hard to accept your proposal for halving strategic weapons over the next five years, and to reach the earliest possible agreement on longer-range INF along the lines you sketched at Reykjavik. I shall make it clear that we are prepared to endorse the INF agreement on which you and the Russians are now working, provided our conditions on verification and shorter-range systems are satisfied. The draft Treaty your people have now tabled at Geneva provides an admirable basis for this.

I shall remind him that, as you and I agreed at Camp David last year, nuclear reductions will point up the importance of eliminating conventional imbalance. I will press firmly for progress both in the existing MBFR talks and in the new forum at Vienna.

I expect Gorbachev to stress his concerns about SDI, and to try to drive wedges between us on the ABM Treaty. I intend to stick to the position which you and I agreed at Camp David in 1984. I hope to get Gorbachev to recognise that these four points offer a sensible and realistic way forward. I shall make it clear that your SDI programme will continue (as no doubt will his) and that such research should be pursued to the point of establishing feasibility. I shall try to persuade him that strategic reductions should not be held hostage to unrealistic Soviet attempts to impose new constraints in practice on the US programme. At the same time, I intend to urge on him the need for further discussion with your people to establish what both sides plan to do over the next few years. As you know, I believe that a sense of predictability about the shape, scope and timescale of programmes could provide the reassurance necessary to allow agreement to be reached on radical cuts in strategic weapons.

There will probably be discussion of a chemical weapons ban. I will make it clear that no agreement can be reached without your own endorsement; and that the Russians have to convince us that they are truly interested in a comprehensive ban with an effective verification regime.

I am looking forward to this visit. It will be an opportunity to put across some key points on the Western position, not only to Gorbachev himself, but to a wider Soviet public (my speech in Moscow is to be published in the Soviet press, and I hope that a TV interview will also be broadcast nationwide). Gorbachev may be the best Soviet leader we could have at present. But I am under no illusions. He is a dedicated Soviet Communist and Russian nationalist. We should certainly not make concessions to him out of a misguided desire to help along his reform process. But we have a major interest in getting the Russians to behave less aggressively. I shall be doing my best to get Gorbachev to see that he has an interest in this too.

