

RECORD OF A MEETING BETWEEN THE PRIME MINISTER AND REPRESENTATIVES
OF THE SOVIET COMMITTEE FOR THE DEFENCE OF PEACE, ON MONDAY 30 MARCH 1987
1987 AT 0900.

Those present were:

Mr. Borovik, Chairman of the Committee	The Prime Minister
Miss Ulanova, Prima Ballerina and Vice Chairman of the Committee	Sir Geoffrey Howe
Mr. Karpov, First Secretary of the Union of Writers	Mr. C. D. Powell
Dr. Ilyin, Vice President of the Soviet Academy of Medical Sciences	Mr. Pollock (Interpreter)
Mr. Chetirev, Director of the Ordzhonikidze Machine Tool Factory	Mr. Hemans (British Embassy)

Mr. Borovik introduced the delegation. He and Mr. Karpov presented the Prime Minister with their latest books. They had both recently been awarded a state prize for literature. Miss Ulanova said that she would have presented a book too had she known that it would be appropriate.

Mr. Borovik said that he wanted the meeting to be informal. He had not brought a petition. He welcomed the Prime Minister to the Soviet Union. The first visit at this level in 12 years was significant. On behalf of the Committee which was the most representative organisation in the Soviet Union he said that the question of most concern was nuclear disarmament. The Committee did not understand how it was possible to believe that nuclear weapons were a positive feature guaranteeing peace. They had not prevented conventional war. The balance of terror was a waste of resources and a humiliation for mankind. Even if nuclear weapons were a guarantee of peace there would be no need to increase them further or put them in space. The Committee supported the Soviet Government's INF proposals and the separation of British and French weapons from the main dialogue. Public opinion tended not to agree. British weapons were pointed at the Soviet Union. They were to be increased eight-fold which was a stimulant to the arms race. The UK seemed to be a major obstacle to nuclear disarmament. High nuclear expenditure took away resources from other essentials like the environment and energy. Within a few decades our environment would be a serious threat to

to the continuation of life on earth. Dr. Ilyin supported this with reference to his work with Professor Roberts on the effects of a nuclear exchange. 2½ billion people would die in a 10,000 megaton exchange compared to 4 billion killed in 15,000 wars over 5,000 years. Chernobyl, the effects of which he was in charge of investigating, was an example of what could happen.

Mr. Borovik said that there was a false impression in Western Europe of the Soviet Union, which was not totalitarian and its people did not think in stereotypes. He criticised those in the UK who said that it was necessary to speak to the Soviet Union from a position of strength, and that this had brought the Soviet Union to the negotiating table. For 70 years this tactic had failed. Churchill who had advocated it, had himself changed his view later in life. 'New thinking' was needed. In 1987 'if you want peace prepare for war' was an outdated concept.

Mr. Karpov criticised the Western media for reporting everything about the Soviet Union with a 'built-in minus sign'. Emigres who had a negative attitude anyway were in great measure responsible for this. Not everything was perfect in the Soviet Union. But the West never saw the other side.

Mr. Borovik said that those with a professional hatred of the Soviet Union were received in high places in Britain. We needed other sources of information as well. He asked the Prime Minister to look carefully at what the Soviet Union was doing during her visit and help Britain in general to get a truer picture. The current restructuring programme was a revolutionary development directed at improving the quality of life. That could not hurt anyone.

In reply the Prime Minister said that the aim should be to prevent all war not only nuclear. Conventional war was not as some thought an acceptable alternative. Both Britain, which had stood alone against Hitler for two years, and the Soviet Union knew how terrible conventional war was. Conventional weapons had never prevented

conventional war. Nuclear weapons were a very great deterrent. Not so many were needed, but deterrence was essential. A war in a situation where nuclear weapons had been eliminated would lead to a race to get them back which would be far more dangerous than maintaining an effective deterrent. The British deterrent was being upgraded by two and a half times. Since Polaris was introduced Soviet warheads had been increased by five times. Even if strategic missiles were reduced by 50 per cent, and assuming the introduction of Trident, British weapons would be a smaller percentage of Soviet weapons than they were in 1970. The image of the Soviet Union of which Mr. Borovik had spoken was determined by reality. The Helsinki Final Act confirmed the right of people to leave their countries. This was not the case in the Soviet Union. In Britain we enjoyed the four great freedoms of the Atlantic Charter, freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want and freedom from fear. Britain was excited about current developments in the Soviet Union. Increasing personal freedoms were a great help towards arms control agreements. Those who kept their promises to their citizens were more likely to keep their promises to others. As Dr. Sakharov had said an open society was the greatest guarantee of trust. Britain as an open society could be trusted. As NATO had always said, its weapons would never be used except against an attack. Peace did not come from the simple wish for it but from positive measures to protect security. As to negotiating from a position of strength, the West had begged the Soviet Union to remove the SS20s and they had only agreed to do so when Western INF was deployed.

Mr. Borovik said nuclear weapons had not prevented Vietnam, Korea, the Middle East, Iran/Iraq, Afghanistan, the Falklands, Libya or Grenada. The Prime Minister contrasted Grenada when the United States had left and free elections had been held, with Afghanistan.

The meeting ended at 0945.

SUBJECT
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From the Private Secretary

2 April 1987

PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO MOSCOW: MEETING WITH
THE SOVIET COMMITTEE FOR THE DEFENCE OF PEACE

I enclose a record of the Prime Minister's meeting with the Soviet Committee for the Defence of Peace in Moscow on 30 March.

Charles Powell

Lyn Parker, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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