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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

26 May 1988

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Dear Charles,

Sunday Express

The Foreign Secretary has been asked to contribute a leader article to the Sunday Express on 29 May. He has asked me to send you the enclosed copy of the material we have sent to the editor, in case the Prime Minister would be interested to see it.

Yours ever,

(L Parker)  
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq  
PS/No 10 Downing Street

SECRETARY OF STATE'S ARTICLE FOR THE SUNDAY EXPRESS

MY HOPES FOR THE MOSCOW SUMMIT

- We have not seen a President of the United States in Moscow since 1972. For that reason alone, Mr Reagan's visit is a momentous occasion of historic significance.
- Not surprisingly, his arrival has set off something of a bull market for shares in long-term peace and security. But we have been this way before only to see the market brought down by bears - Russian bears.
- Many of us still remember how hopes rose when in 1959 Mr Macmillan visited Moscow in his famous fur hat. Sadly, that turned out to be a false start. Our hopes rose again in the 70s when President Nixon and Mr Brezhnev exchanged visits, and the United States and Soviet Union signed some 25 agreements. Another false start. Things like the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the persecution of dissidents soon put paid to what was known in those days as détente.
- People ask me whether it will be any different this time round. Is it for real, will it last? I believe that there may be grounds for genuine optimism.
- First of all, despite the presence of thousands of journalists, the Moscow Summit is not just a five day photo opportunity. It is the latest stage in almost ten years of patient and dedicated effort by the US, Britain and other NATO allies. Three beacons have guided us throughout: firmness in negotiation; the need for strong defences; determination to build trust with the East that will last.
- The results so far are plain to see. Confidence has grown. Contacts of all kinds have spread. Only last week we invited a Soviet team to look at our Chemical Defence Establishment at Porton Down. Britain will be sending its own team in July to see the Soviet Chemical Warfare Establishment at Shikany.

- Agreements have been signed, notably the INF Treaty removing worldwide all medium range nuclear rockets - leaving, incidentally, the unilateral disarmers without a leg to stand on.
- Vast credit for this goes to President Reagan and Secretary of State George Shultz. The Moscow Summit is the fourth in the series. George Shultz has himself had more than twenty meetings with his opposite number, Mr Shevardnadze. These occasions provide the shots of political adrenalin needed to get the experts cracking. And I can assure you that the experts need it. Some long-standing arms control negotiations have displayed as much sense of urgency and purpose as dinosaurs wrestling in mud.
  - But the United States has not been alone in this effort. The NATO allies have also put their shoulders to the wheel. Look for instance at Britain's contribution.
  - Over the last five years I have been to every Eastern European country and I have twice paid official visits to the Soviet Union. It was Britain which invited Mr Gorbachev to Western Europe, shortly before he took office in 1985. It was Margaret Thatcher who first spotted that this was someone with whom the West could do business. The success of her visit to Moscow last year will for long be the standard by which visits of other European statesmen are judged.
  - Mr Gorbachev has, of course, had a key role also in making possible this Summit in his country's capital. Credit must be given where it is due. He has proclaimed the arrival of "new thinking" in Soviet foreign policy.
  - Certainly the impression that I have received from many conversations with Soviet leaders is that the whole area of foreign policy is under critical review. That is hardly surprising given the poor hand that Mr Gorbachev was dealt by his predecessors when he took over in 1985. Look at things as he must have seen them.

- A massive Soviet propaganda barrage had failed to stop the West rightly bringing in its own missiles to counter Soviet SS20 rockets targeted on the heart of Europe. Soviet lives, resources and prestige were being thrown away fruitlessly in the oppression of Afghanistan and in other ill-judged involvements in the Third World. The trampling of human rights was dragging the Soviet Union's reputation through the mud.
  
- Over a year ago I questioned whether "new thinking" was more style than substance - a kind of designer diplomacy with a Gorbachev label. I suggested three tests which would indicate the seriousness of the Soviet Union's new approach:
  - first, Afghanistan: would Soviet troops withdraw?
  - Second, arms control: would the Russians accept real verification measures?
  - Third, human rights: would the Russians live up to their international commitments?
  
- Today, as Mr Reagan arrives in Moscow, he will note with satisfaction that Western firmness and Mr Gorbachev's realism have produced progress in all three areas. Soviet troops are leaving Afghanistan. The Russians have been brought to accept tough verification provisions at the heart of the INF Treaty. There have been improvements, though still nothing like enough, in Soviet respect for human rights.
  
- East/West relations are on the right track. But there is still a long way to go.
  
- So, what I would like to see at the Moscow Summit is steady, sure, realistic progress where it matters. Towards an agreement on reducing by half the long range nuclear rockets of the super-powers, perhaps by the end of the year. Towards cutting the massive Russian superiority in conventional forces and chemical weapons. Towards limiting nuclear tests. Towards

cooperation, not confrontation, in dealing with the world's trouble spots - in Africa, the Middle East, the Gulf, South East Asia. Towards a further improvement in Soviet human rights performance.

- We shall have to wait and see whether there will be dramatic breakthroughs in any of these areas. If so, no-one will be more pleased than us. But no-one should be dismayed if progress is less striking. Regular meetings at this level are themselves a sign of the improved state of relations. We cannot, and should not, expect dramatic developments each time round.
  
- The plain truth is that those of us involved in handling East/West relations need the stamina and determination of the long-distance runner. Building trust will not be accomplished overnight. It is a titanic task, matching that which Mr Gorbachev has set himself in reforming the Soviet Union.
  
- The key to success is to take the long view. In face of the inevitable upsets and difficulties, never to lose sight of the essential - the elimination of the possibility of war between East and West.
  
- This week's television pictures of the Moscow Summit will no doubt be spectacular. But they will also beam into our homes hopes for a future world of peace and security: hopes more solidly based than for many a year.

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