



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

Self
Time
minutes
CDP

*You may like to
be brought up to
date -*

3 January 1989

*Decisions may be
required later this
evening.*

*CDP
3/1*

MOSCOW HUMAN RIGHTS CONFERENCE

General Powell telephoned me yet again from California this afternoon to discuss the Prime Minister's reply to President Reagan's message about the Moscow Human Rights Conference.

General Powell said there were those in the Administration who were not keen to see the United States agree to a Moscow Conference: and others who saw the prospect of a Conference in 1991 as very useful leverage upon the Soviet Union to continue to improve its human rights performance. The President was now in this latter category and there was no longer any doubt that the United States was going to agree to the holding of a Conference in Moscow.

General Powell continued that the Americans had to take two steps. One was for Shultz to write to Shevardnadze setting out what he hoped they could agree when they met in Paris at the end of this week. The second was to draft a public statement of the United States' intention to attend a Conference. Although the message to Shevardnadze would go into some detail, it was not the Americans' intention to be so specific in their own public statement about the conditions for attending a Conference as envisaged in the Prime Minister's message. Their approach was rather to say that President Reagan had authorised the United States delegation in Vienna to support United States' participation in a series of CSCE conferences including one in Moscow in 1991: that the President had taken this step to encourage the progress made in human rights matters in the Soviet Union over the 12 months: that the President fully recognised that much remained to be done to meet human rights criteria and would be expecting full compliance with Soviet undertakings and further movement in the direction of reform: and that lack of future progress in this direction could lead the United States to reconsider its attendance at the Conference. This was deliberately less specific than our proposal, which in the American view would leave too little flexibility over a future decision whether to participate or not: and would introduce new conditions, for instance the introduction of laws on freedom of speech and religion, which the Americans had not

before set and which were most unlikely to be fulfilled. General Powell said that he recognised the American approach did not go as far as we wished. It might be that we would wish to issue a tougher and more specific statement than they did.

I said that I was disturbed by General Powell's reference to flexibility. That was precisely our worry: that without any clear conditions for Western participation, we should end up being dragged along to a Conference even though there had not been satisfactory progress on human rights in the Soviet Union. That said, it seemed to me that the sort of statement he envisaged was not too far removed from what we intended to say. It would be helpful if he could send me a draft text very rapidly which we could look at and make some suggestions. At the end of the day, we might have to make our own, more specific and conditional statement. But it was probably worth one more effort to agree the main lines of a text which we could both use. It would certainly have more impact if we both said the same thing.

I will let you know as soon as we receive something from the White House. From the way General Powell spoke, it seems clear that we shall need to reach a decision this evening whether to try to arrive at a common text or to go our separate ways.

(C.D. POWELL)

Lyn Parker, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.