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INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON, MOSCOW, PARIS, UKDEL NATO

MIPT: MR GORBACHEV'S VISIT: MESSAGE TO CHANCELLOR KOHL

1. Following is text:

Begins

Dear Helmut

I have asked Sir Christopher Mallaby to ensure that you are informed as soon as possible of the main points of my talks last week with Mr Gorbachev. But I wanted to give you my own impressions of the visit and of my discussions with him.

To all outward appearances Gorbachev remains ebullient, self-assured and relaxed. His style went down well with our public opinion. In private I found him frank about the enormous problems which confront him in the Soviet Union, above all the economy and the nationalities. The latter is obviously a major worry to which he does not pretend to have an answer. He is fearful that the West will try to exploit the issue against him. He claims to be absolutely determined to press ahead with perestroika and I believe him. But he was also rather defensive about reports in the West that perestroika was running into trouble and that we did not want it to succeed. I assured him

that

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OUT TELEGRAM (CONT)

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told <sup>President</sup> George Bush, of whom Mr Gorbachev spoke noticeably warmly, that <sup>Secretary</sup> Baker's trip to Moscow in May is particularly well timed in this regard.

I twice raised the Soviet sale of Fencer to Libya but got no response.

My overall impression is that <sup>Gorbachev</sup> he is more conscious of Soviet weakness than strength. He is relying heavily on his personal style and its attractiveness to Western public opinion to counter this. He is prepared to a limited degree to work with us on regional problems where he feels the Soviet Union is over-extended and there is more to be gained from a show of statesmanship than unproductive confrontation. But old habits die hard, and we shall continue to face traditional Soviet tactics of deceit and subversion where they judge they can get away with them.

The conclusions I draw are:

- we should continue to declare our support for his internal policies. The more we can encourage him forward, the more difficult it will be for him to turn back without losing ground with Western opinion, yet the more he will face agonizing choices,
- but we must remain absolutely firm on defence and on maintaining NATO's strength and unity. That is what has brought us this far. Above all we must not seem to back down in the face of Soviet bluster <sup>over</sup> or modernisation. The fact is that the West is winning, however hard Gorbachev strives to seize the high ground. We shall only lose the advantage if we show weakness.

I look forward to our meeting.

Warm regards

Margaret

Ends

For distribution order see Page

Catchword

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CONFIDENTIAL



FILG  
etc

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10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

*From the Private Secretary*

11 April 1989

**MR. GORBACHEV'S VISIT:  
MESSAGES TO KOHL AND MITTERRAND**

Thank you for your letter of 11 April enclosing draft messages from the Prime Minister to Chancellor Kohl and President Mitterrand about her recent meeting with Mr. Gorbachev. I think that the Prime Minister would be content for the messages to issue with the manuscript amendments indicated on the enclosed texts.

BA ||

I should be grateful if they could be despatched tonight.

(C. D. POWELL)

Stephen Wall, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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MR GORBACHEV'S VISIT: MESSAGE TO CHANCELLOR KOHL  
1. MIFT contains the text of a message from the Prime Minister to Chancellor Kohl giving her assessment of her talks with Mr Gorbachev. You will separately be receiving a detailed briefing telegram. Please ensure that if you are unable to see Kohl himself the message and key points from the oral briefing nevertheless reach him as soon as possible.  
2. See MIFT.

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PS/PUS  
Sir J Fretwell  
Mr Ratford  
Head Soviet Dept

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

11 April 1989

*AM*

*Dear Charles,*

Mr Gorbachev's visit: Messages to Kohl and Mitterrand

In your letter of 7 April you suggested that the Prime Minister would be prepared to consider sending messages to Chancellor Kohl and President Mitterrand. The Foreign Secretary thinks it would be worth giving both of them a fuller briefing than they will otherwise have received and also sharing with them the Prime Minister's impressions of the visit and of the way ahead.

I enclose draft messages to Chancellor Kohl and to President Mitterrand following the line of the message to President Bush with adjustments to take particular concerns into account (eg President Mitterrand having asked us to raise Lebanon).

The separate square brackets indicate suggested deletions, our thought being that, while we need to keep pressing the message on modernisation with Chancellor Kohl, the soft sell may work better with President Mitterrand.

*Yours,*

*Stephen Wall*

(J S Wall)

Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq  
10 Downing Street

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10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

7 April 1989

Dear Stepler.

MR. GORBACHEV'S VISIT

I am sure the Prime Minister will want to send a message to President Bush about Mr. Gorbachev's visit to the United Kingdom. This should not only respond to Bush's own message about Central America and the further message which General Scowcroft sent me, but convey some conclusions from the visit and thoughts on the way ahead. I should be grateful for your help in preparing a draft which the Prime Minister could see as early as possible next week.

BF

I am copying this letter to Brian Hawtin (Ministry of Defence) and Trevor Woolley (Cabinet Office).

If you think saying to Kohl & Tervand would also be appropriate. I think the Prime Minister would be ready to send them.

Stephen Wall, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

your sincerely  
  
C D POWELL  
be ready to send them.

SECRET