

OUT TELEGRAM

Classification
CONFIDENTIAL

Caveat

Precedence
IMMEDIATE

ZCZC 1 ZCZC
 TC 2 CONFIDENTIAL
 CAVEAT 3
 FM 4 FM FCO
 TO 5 TO IMMEDIATE PARIS
 TELNO 6 TELNO
 OF 7 OF
 AND TO 8 INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON, MOSCOW, BONN, UKDEL NATO

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11 (MR GORBACHEV'S VISIT: MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT MITTERRAND

12 1. Following is text:

13 Begins

14 Dear Francois

Mr. Resnik

15 I thought you might like to have my impressions of my talks
16 last week with Mr Gorbachev.

17 To all outward appearances Gorbachev remains ebullient,
 18 self-assured and relaxed. His style went down well with our
 19 public opinion. In private I found him frank about the enormous
 20 problems which confront him in the Soviet Union, above all the
 21 economy and the nationalities. The latter is obviously a major
 22 worry to which he does not pretend to have an answer. He is
 23 fearful that the West will try to exploit the issue against him.
 24 He claims to be absolutely determined to press ahead with
 25 perestroika and I believe him. But he was also rather defensive
 26 about reports in the West that perestroika was running into
 27 trouble and that we did not want it to succeed. I assured him
 28 that I supported what he was doing in the Soviet Union, but did
 29 so only on the basis that we keep our defences absolutely sure.

He

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He had little new to say on arms control. I took him to task on the disparity between Soviet statements about their chemical weapons' capability and our knowledge of the real situation. He was rather defensive and suggested further contacts to remove misunderstandings. The announcement in his speech that the Soviet Union would suspend production of military grade uranium and reduce production of military grade plutonium is of no practical significance, and we are making that clear publicly. Indeed one gets the feeling that he is running out of ideas in the arms control area. French and British weapons were not mentioned at all. He adopted a rather menacing tone on modernisation of NATO's SNF, conveniently ignoring the modernisation which the Soviet Union has already conducted. ~~We~~ We should turn this to our advantage in NATO, by arguing that failure to take an adequate decision on modernisation at the Summit would appear weak. More generally, any risk of euphoria as a result of his visit has been largely dispelled by subsequent events: the accident with the nuclear submarine and the killing of demonstrators in Georgia.

Where I did detect some progress was in his attitude on regional problems. He was actively helpful over Namibia, and constructive on the Middle East. ~~Shevardnadze told Geoffrey Howe that the Russians were trying to shift the Syrians on Lebanon but that their influence was limited. I took~~ ~~the~~ ~~conduct~~ ~~of~~ ~~Cuba~~ ~~and~~ ~~Nicaragua~~ ~~in~~ ~~Central~~ ~~America.~~ ~~He~~ ~~claimed~~ ~~to~~ ~~be~~ ~~firmly~~ ~~in~~ ~~favour~~ ~~of~~ ~~a~~ ~~political~~ ~~settlement~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~region.~~ *Shevardnadze said* *Lebanon, as he had asked. Shevardnadze said* *that the Russians were trying to shift the Syrians on Lebanon but that their influence was limited. I took him to speak up with the Russians* *about the conduct of Cuba and Nicaragua in Central America.* *He claimed to be firmly in favour of a political settlement in the region.*

He professed concern about delay in the United States coming forward with new policies and a firm commitment to continue the arms control negotiations. His spokesman also made play with this to the press. I took the line that a measured approach in coming forward with new policies was right. I have told ~~George Bush~~ *George Bush*, of whom Mr Gorbachev spoke noticeably warmly,

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Catchword.

that

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Severam
that ~~Jim~~ 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 substantive
no response.

My overall impression is that ~~he~~ *Gorbachev* 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 on 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 hope this is some help.~~

Warm regards

Margaret *Walker*

Ends

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Catchword:

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PS

PS/Mr Waldegrave

PS/PUS

Sir J Fretwell

Mr Ratford

Head Soviet Dept

Head News Dept

Head Planners

Additional

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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 PRESIDENT MITTERRAND

1. MIFT contains text of a message from the Prime Minister to President Mitterrand. ~~Grateful you~~^{Please} arrange ~~earliest possible~~ delivery.

HOWE

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PS

PS/Mr Waldegrave

PS/PUS

Sir J Fretwell

Mr Ratford

Head Soviet Dept

Head News Dept

Head Planners

Additional

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

11 April 1989

EM

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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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

you may
C D POWELL
be ready to send them.

SECRET