

TOP SECRET



Copy no. ^{tw} 1 of 5 copies

68: MARATHON

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

MR. APPELYARD

PROJECT MARATHON

I attach a copy of a message to the Prime Minister from President Bush, accepting our proposal for dealing with Project MARATHON. I should be grateful if the necessary follow-up action could now be put in hand with the companies and with other Governments. The Prime Minister ought to reply in due course, informing the President of the action we have taken.

I am copying this minute and attachment to Stephen Wall (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), Simon Webb (Ministry of Defence) and Martin Stanley (Department of Trade and Industry).

C.D. POWELL

1 June 1990

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10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

MR. APLEYARD
CABINET OFFICE

PROJECT MARATHON

The Prime Minister has signed the messages proposed in your minute of 6 June. I attach the signed originals so that you can arrange for their despatch.

C. D. POWELL

6 June 1990

SECRET

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MR POWELL

c Sir Robin Butler

PROJECT MARATHON

attached.

I undertook in my minute of 4 June to submit draft parallel messages from the Prime Minister to President Mitterrand, Chancellor Kohl and Prime Minister Kaifu, in support of the messages to be sent by President Bush. A draft is attached.

2. We now have the definitive version (also attached at Annex A) of the text of the President's messages which our Embassy in Washington confirms have been sent. For completeness President Bush mentions that a similar message has been sent to the Prime Minister. This is a reference to the earlier message, and no separate message will be sent. If the Prime Minister is content with the draft of her messages, I suggest that you might return them to me. I will arrange for them to be despatched by the FCO for delivery.

3. My minute of 4 June also referred to the COCOM discussions now in train about the potential export of fibre optics equipment at a lower level of technology. You will have seen Stephen Wall's letter to you of today which covers the position which the British delegations are taking at the High Level Meetings today and tomorrow.

4. I am sending copies of this minute and attachments to Stephen Wall (FCO), Simon Webb (MoD), Martin Stanley (DTI)

L V Appleyard

L V APPELYARD

Cabinet Office

6 June 1990

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a. Breen

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Mitterand

h

DRAFT

Message from the Prime Minister to:

President Mitterand
Chancellor Kohl
Prime Minister Kaifu

President

George Bush has written to inform you of his decision to refuse an application for an export licence by an international consortium to instal a transcontinental fibre optics system across the Soviet Union. I am writing to let you know that after careful consideration the British Government has taken a similar decision in respect of an export licence application from a different group of companies, also to lay a fibre optics link across the Soviet Union.

President

2. I strongly support George Bush's remarks on the importance of preventing the damage which the export of such technology to the Soviet Union would cause to our collective security. I hope very much that you will feel able to take a similar position if you receive applications from companies in your country. I believe that it is in our common interest to work together closely on this question.

With warm regards.

Ch.

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ANNEX A

Message from President Bush to:

President Mitterrand
Chancellor Kohl
Prime Minister Kaifu

I am writing to inform you of my decision to deny an export licence application by an international consortium to instal a trans-Continental fibre optics system in the Soviet Union. After a careful review of this application, we concluded that allowing the export of this technology would cause extensive damage to our collective security at a time of great uncertainty about the future course of Soviet policy. Access to such technology and equipment would enhance Soviet military command and control capabilities and also complicate arms control verification.

Therefore, I request your support in denying the transfer of COCOM-embargoed fibre optics technology and equipment to the Soviet Union. I am sending similar messages to Margaret Thatcher and [other leaders] since firms in our countries are, for the present at least, the only ones capable of pulling together a consortium for a project of this nature and magnitude.

Warm regards

Sincerely

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Soviet Union - Kels 14 17



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CABINET OFFICE

70 Whitehall London SW1A 2AS Telephone 071-270 0309

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6 June 1990

New Mike

PROJECT MARATHON

I enclose a copy of a telegram from Washington updating the position on Marathon and TSL.

Your press brief already covers the points made: clearly you would not comment on the kinds of claim reported in paragraph 2. But you may wish to keep your press office in the picture.

Paragraph 4 confirms that the messages from President Bush to President Mitterrand, Chancellor Kohl and Prime Minister Kaifu have been sent. (The text is that attached to Len Appleyard's minute of earlier today to No 10.)

I am sending copies of this letter and attachment to Ian McDonald (MOD), Donald MacLaren (FCO),

*Yours
D C J BALL*

D C J BALL

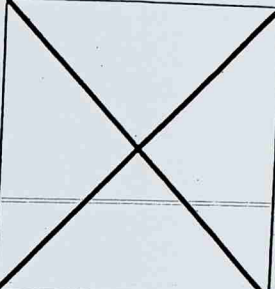
M V Coolican Esq
Department of Trade and Industry

cc. Mr Appleyard
Mr Reeves
Sir Percy Cradock
Mr Morris (No 10)

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