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From the Private Secretary

22 June 1990

See file.

SOVIET UNION

Mr. Kossov of the Soviet Embassy came to see me briefly this morning. His purpose was to pass on to us President Gorbachev's personal assessment of his meeting with the Prime Minister. Gorbachev had been very pleased with the talks and rather regretted that there had not been more time for them. He had found them very frank and direct, which he liked: indeed in this respect they were more useful than the talks he had in Washington. He had been impressed by the Prime Minister's up to date knowledge of what had transpired in Washington, as well as at the Warsaw Pact meeting the previous day. His overall assessment of the meeting was very positive and he was looking forward to another one before long. His relations with the Prime Minister were more important to him than those with any other Western leader. I said that I was sure the Prime Minister would be gratified to hear this and would reciprocate many of the sentiments.

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Kossov said that the Soviet Ambassador would be returning to Moscow on Thursday next week for a crucial Central Committee meeting before the forthcoming Party Congress. He wondered whether the Prime Minister would like him to convey a personal message to Gorbachev on that occasion. He thought that it could be a useful indication of support, and Gorbachev needed all the support he could get. I said that I doubted the Prime Minister would be able to see the Ambassador on Wednesday, having been away in Dublin for the previous two days. But we might devise an oral message which I could hand him on the Prime Minister's behalf which he could convey to Gorbachev (as we had done on a previous occasion). Kossov said he was sure the Ambassador would be very content with this. If you agree, I should be grateful if you could let me have a draft.

Kossov displayed a good deal of interest in the NATO summit. I said there was very little I could tell him about this yet. Our aim was to have a very positive and readable statement from the summit, which would fully measure up to the important changes which were taking place.

Kossov referred to the recent message to the Foreign Secretary from Shevardnadze about non-circumvention. He hoped that, reading between the lines, we appreciated the positive

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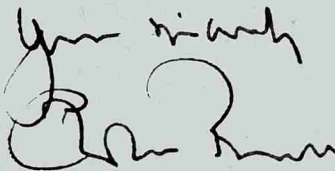
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elements in it. The Russians entirely accepted that we would continue to have Trident. Their main concerns were that our co-operation with the Americans should not extend to other sources of ICBMs. They also wanted to be sure that the counting rules for UK Trident were the same as agreed in the START negotiations for the Americans. I said that I would be hard pushed to identify anything very positive in the message. Our co-operation with the Americans was long-standing and would continue through Trident and beyond. We were not prepared to accept constraints. Nor, of course, would we be bound by the START agreement, which was the bilateral arrangement between the Soviet Union and the United States.

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I am copying this letter to Simon Webb (Ministry of Defence) and Sonia Phippard (Cabinet Office).



(C. D. POWELL)

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office.