

CONFIDENTIAL

Prime Minister

ms

to me

EDP

10/11

NOTE FOR THE RECORD

I went to see the United States Ambassador at his request yesterday to discuss arrangements for the Prime Minister's visit to Washington. Mr Price did not in fact seem very well informed about these. His main purpose was to find out what I knew. I gave him an account, without mentioning our concern about the total amount of time available for discussions at Camp David with the President (the Embassy in Washington advise that this is best dealt with at their end). Mr Price said that he had seen Secretary Weinberger in Washington. He was pressing hard for the Pentagon to be represented at the Camp David meeting. Mr Price thought that the reason why there was no provision for a formal plenary session was precisely to make it easier to reject applications by others to attend. Those whom he expected to be present were: Secretary Shultz, Mr Regan, Admiral Poindexter, himself, Roz Ridgway and Peter Sommer as notetaker.

Mr Price was not sure whether he would attend the separate bilaterals with Secretaries Shultz and Weinberger. He had been invited to spend the night at Camp David.

Mr Price said that he assumed that the Government remained very worried about the outcome of the Reykjavik meeting. So were Secretary Weinberger and the Pentagon. Some of the tentative agreements could obviously cause us acute political difficulties, particularly over the future of Trident. I said that I could not anticipate what the Prime Minister would say to the President, although our general views had been put firmly on the record in Washington. As I had told Mr Seitz, I thought that the Prime Minister would be seeking reassurance about the link between deep cuts in strategic nuclear weapons and action to correct the imbalance in conventional forces; about continuing commitment to nuclear deterrence as the basis for NATO's strategy; and about modernisation of US strategic weapons, given the implications for Trident. Mr Price said that the last point was clearly a crucial one for the Government in political terms.

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Mr Price asked about Mr Kinnock's forthcoming visit to Washington. I said that I could not contribute anything on this. Our Embassy would make whatever arrangements Mr Kinnock suggested. Mr Price said that there was some inclination in Washington to offer Mr Kinnock middle-level appointments with the Administration on this visit, but he himself was not keen. I said that I did not think we had received any such request from Mr Kinnock's office.

Mr Price told me in strict confidence that he was being considered as a possible replacement for Shultz, Weinberger or Poindexter if anyone of them were to leave office before the end of the Administration's term.

CDP

Charles Powell

10 November 1986