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Relations Pt. 4



cc 31

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

13 March 1985

Meeting between the Prime Minister and the General Secretary
of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party in
St. Katherine's Hall of the Kremlin on 13 March at 2035 hours

The Prime Minister met Mr. Gorbachev this evening in St. Katherine's Hall in the Kremlin. On the Soviet side, Mr. Gromyko and Mr. Aleksandrov were present. The Prime Minister was accompanied by the Foreign Secretary, HM Ambassador and me.

Mr. Gorbachev opened with a lengthy statement. He thanked the Prime Minister for coming to Moscow and regretted that it was a sad occasion which brought her. He was pleased to resume his contacts with her. He remembered very well their discussion during his stay in Britain. He welcomed the chance to continue it.

Mr. Gorbachev continued that he recalled that his earlier meeting with the Prime Minister had begun with his reading an oral message from President Chernenko. That message was an invitation to co-operation, by way of seeking jointly to resolve current international problems and expand bilateral relations. On his return to Moscow he had briefed the Politburo in detail on his important discussions. Mr. Gromyko interjected that the Politburo had assessed the results very favourably. Mr. Gorbachev went on that, on behalf of the entire Soviet leadership, he wanted to say that they were in favour of a political dialogue with the United Kingdom and of co-operation in scientific, technical, cultural and other fields. Following his meeting with the Prime Minister in Britain, ties in these fields had become more lively. He did not know whether the Ambassador in Moscow would confirm this. But in his view movement had started. In particular, the Foreign Trade Ministry had drawn up a plan aimed at co-operation in the long term. There was already at least oral agreement on the resumption of contacts in the scientific, cultural and technical fields and he welcomed that.

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Mr. Gorbachev continued that, after all, we all had to live together on the same planet. But this alone was not enough. The Soviet Union was in favour of broad co-operation with the United Kingdom. The possibilities available to both countries were big indeed. If the political will of the British and Soviet leaderships matched each other, then one could look forward to a substantial development of co-operation between the two countries.

Mr. Gorbachev repeated that the Prime Minister had come to Moscow on a sad occasion. But it also coincided with the opening of the arms control talks in Geneva. These marked the start of a new and very serious phase in international relations. The question was how and with what results would these negotiations be concluded. On the answer to this largely depended the future development of international relations. He recalled that he had discussed the prospects for the Geneva talks with the Prime Minister during their meeting at Chequers and he had emphasised that it had not been at all easy for the Soviet Union to go to them because it mistrusted the position taken by the United States. This position cancelled many of the useful achievements of preceding years. The Soviet Union had big doubts as to the true intentions of the United States Government. The Americans were forging ahead with their military plans, were increasing their armaments and military budget and were tightening discipline among their allies.

Mr. Gorbachev continued that he and the Prime Minister had emphasised the enormous danger inherent in the transfer of nuclear weapons into space. The opening statement of the US delegation in Geneva yesterday had confirmed these fears. Under the guise of defence, the United States was trying to drag the arms race into outer space. What then could be the result of the negotiations? For his part, he wished to say that the Soviet Union harboured serious intentions and wished the talks to end in positive results. When the Soviet Union had first actively raised and discussed the non-militarisation of outer space, many Western political leaders had spoken out in favour of this. But now there seemed to be certain nuances in their thinking. When the United States promised some Western countries that they could participate in some of the research work on President Reagan's so-called Strategic Defence Initiative the tone and mood seemed to change. The Soviet Union felt this was a mistake. If arms were transferred to outer space it would be very difficult indeed to find a way out of that situation. The Soviet Union would have to look for some response. That would mean an increase in nuclear weapons and the whipping up still further of the arms race. Surely we should all display far more wisdom and statesmanship at this point and a greater sense of responsibility. This responsibility rested primarily on the shoulders of the

leadership of the principal nations of the world.

Mr. Gorbachev said that he wanted to repeat that the Soviet Union wanted very much indeed to reach agreement in Geneva on large scale and mutually acceptable - he repeated mutually acceptable - measures. One-sided measures or concessions were something which the Soviet Union would not accept. In his discussions with the Prime Minister in Britain she had agreed in principle with this, and that relations should be based on equality and equal security. The Soviet Union recognised Britain's right to security and hoped that Britain recognised theirs. Indeed, all countries had the right. If we were all guided by this approach, he could say on behalf of the entire Soviet leadership, that agreement in Geneva was possible. He knew Britain's weight in international affairs and the particular role of the Prime Minister. He was counting on understanding of the Soviet position and looked forward to concrete steps from the United Kingdom, both to help agreement at Geneva and to expand dialogue.

The Prime Minister thanked Mr. Gorbachev for his statement. She had been very pleased that he and Mrs. Gorbachev had come to Britain. Their visit had been a tremendous success, one of the most successful ever. It had been both a personal success for Mr. Gorbachev as well as a success for restoring friendly relations between the Soviet Union and the United Kingdom. The effect of the visit had been felt far beyond the United Kingdom. It had been reflected in newspapers and comments in the United States, Europe and the Far East. She wished to repeat that it had been an outstanding international success.

The Prime Minister continued that she had also enjoyed the talks she had held with Mr. Gorbachev. She believed that those talks would turn out to have influenced events. She had said publicly after their meeting that she felt that she and Mr. Gorbachev could do business together. This had been noted with particular interest in the United States. The British people were putting great faith in Mr. Gorbachev personally, in the prospect for a better dialogue with the Soviet Union and in hopes for success in the Geneva talks. She recalled very well the message which Mr. Gorbachev had brought from President Chernenko. When they had spoken about it, she had said that the generations which remembered the last war had a special duty to work for peace. She accepted Mr. Gorbachev's invitation to co-operation gladly. A lot more political dialogue was needed to establish confidence and trust between the NATO and Warsaw Pact countries. Unless we had that trust, it would be much more difficult for the Geneva talks to succeed. So we said yes to more cultural, scientific and trade contacts. All these could help. This was particularly important in a year which

marked the tenth anniversary of the signing of the Helsinki Agreement.

The Prime Minister continued that she would like to turn to a subject which was in everyone's mind, the arms control talks in Geneva. They must succeed. It was vital to find the political will and a way through. She had read Mr. Gorbachev's election and acceptance speeches very carefully. She had found in them language very similar to that which President Reagan and she had used at their meeting in Camp David. It seemed to her that both Mr. Gorbachev and President Reagan shared the aim of the elimination of nuclear weapons and of nuclear war. She also wanted to stress a point on which she and President Reagan had agreed at Camp David and which had been embodied in the four points issued after that meeting, namely that neither side would seek superiority over the other, but rather balance.

Mr. Gromyko interjected that the need ultimately to eliminate nuclear weapons had appeared in the joint Soviet/American Communique at Geneva. The Prime Minister had cited evidence from separate statements, but the goal was formally established in a joint document. The problem was that the Americans were not acting in accordance with it. The Prime Minister said that this was precisely the point which she was trying to make. Both sides shared certain objectives and had declared them both separately and jointly.

The Prime Minister continued that there were already two Treaties which both the Soviet Union and the United States had signed affecting possible military developments in space: the Outer Space Treaty and the ABM Treaty. The second of these, the ABM Treaty, permitted research by either signatory, for the very good reason that it was not possible to verify what research was being done. But if research should ever result in the possibility of deployment of new weapons, the Treaty required that deployment should be the subject of negotiation. In her talks with President Reagan they had both agreed that the aim should be balance and not superiority and that, while research on new defensive systems was permitted, deployment must be the subject of negotiation. They had also agreed that the overall objective remained deterrence. The agreement at Camp David had been important because it was the first time that the Americans had been persuaded to put publicly on record that any deployment would require negotiation. President Reagan had repeated this during her visit to Washington in February. She recognised that this was not the occasion to get into detailed discussions. Mr. Gromyko suggested sardonically that three or four hours would be enough to cover the particular point which the Prime Minister had just touched on.

The Prime Minister said that she would conclude by saying that she would do everything she could to promote the confidence to enable the Geneva talks to be a success. Public opinion wanted a success and had high expectations. It was vital to find the will to make them succeed. If Mr. Gorbachev ever wished to send a message to her, she would be very ready to receive it.

Mr. Gorbachev said that he would certainly take that into account. He would like to expand his dialogue with the Prime Minister and was perfectly willing to exchange information and hold consultations. On behalf of the entire leadership, he would like to emphasise that the general trend of his discussion with the Prime Minister and notably the remarks she had just made, was something which he took a liking to. The focus of their talks was joint efforts to expand co-operation, find points of contact and to promote a political dialogue. The present state of the world required such a dialogue. "We must continue to meet and talk to one another and have exchanges of views". Once again, he was grateful to the Prime Minister for coming to Moscow to pay tribute to President Chernenko.

The Prime Minister said that, in briefing the press, she would say that they had held positive and constructive talks and would then follow the line of Mr. Gorbachev's summing up. People in Britain took great pleasure in Mr. Gorbachev's appointment to his distinguished office. We would also be pleased to see Mr. Gromyko if he were to come to London, as he had promised. Mr. Gorbachev chuckled and said that Mr. Gromyko was waiting for the London fog to evaporate. Mr. Gromyko said it was really a question of finding the right timing.

The meeting ended at 2130.

I am sending copies of this letter to Richard Mottram (Ministry of Defence) and to Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office). It should have only a very limited distribution. I should be grateful if you could telegraph a full text, strictly personal, to the Ambassador in Moscow for any comments and amendments which he may have.

(C.D. Powell)

L.V. Appleyard, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

15 March 1985

Dear Charles,

copy attached attached

Prime Minister's Meeting with Mr Gorbachev

In your letter of 14 March you asked us to telegraph a full text to the Ambassador in Moscow for any comments or amendments he might have.

Sir Iain Sutherland has replied that he has no amendments or additions to propose to your admirably comprehensive record.

I am sending copies of this letter to Richard Mottram (Ministry of Defence) and to Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

Yours ever,

Colin Budd

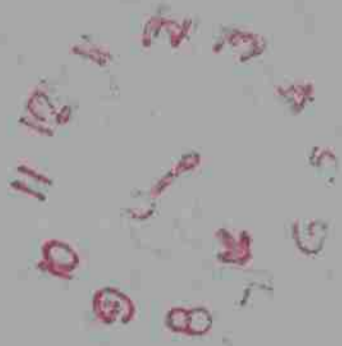
(C R Budd)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

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Soviet Union: PM's attendance @ Russian funerals;

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10 DOWNING STREET

14 March 1985

From the Private Secretary

PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH MR GORBACHEV:
BRIEFING OF THE TEN

I understand that we shall need to brief the Ten, either here or in Moscow, on the Prime Minister's meeting with Mr Gorbachev.

As you know, the Prime Minister is never keen to divulge too much on these occasions. I have marked on the enclosed copy of the record what I regard as the maximum which could be drawn upon. A slightly fuller account could be given at the quadrilateral meeting of Ambassadors in Moscow.

C D POWELL

Len Appleyard Esq
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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