



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

27 November 1986

CDP
07/11

Dear Charles,

Constraints on Shorter-Range INF

During her statement in the House on 18 October on her Camp David talks, the Prime Minister was asked by Sir Frederic Bennett whether the process of INF reduction and ultimately removal would also apply to the "so called short-range nuclear weapons", in which the Russians had a clear superiority. In her response, the Prime Minister referred to the need to cover shorter-range systems in the INF negotiations, in terms which were wholly consistent with the previous UK position and with the negotiating position placed on the Geneva table by the US. However, we have now been pressed by the Press Office of CND on whether the Prime Minister's actual words represent any change in the UK position. Given this interest, it is possible that such enquiries will also begin to feature in Parliamentary questions from the Opposition.

We therefore propose to answer the CND enquiry, and any subsequent questions, in the following way:

"We fully support the Alliance position, as reflected in the current US negotiating proposal at Geneva, that Soviet shorter-range INF must not be left unrestrained as a result of an agreement on longer range INF. It has always been our view that appropriate constraints on these weapons should form an integral part of an agreement on longer range INF. We have also welcomed the apparent agreement at Reykjavik between the US and the Soviet Union that there should be subsequent negotiations dealing with shorter-range systems. The scope of such further negotiations will need to be considered within the Alliance.

/Meanwhile



Meanwhile, our priority - as the Prime Minister and President Reagan agreed at Camp David on 15 November - is to conclude an INF agreement on the lines already agreed among Allies and as presented by the US as part of their negotiating proposals at Geneva. This should incorporate tight constraints on any increase in Soviet SS22 and 23 systems which could circumvent the agreement on longer-range INF forces, together with an agreed right for the US to match such systems."

I am copying this letter to John Howe in the MOD and Trevor Woolley in the Cabinet Office.

Yours ever,

Colin Budd

(C R Budd)
Private Secretary

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