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Folder Title: Mrs. Thatcher on SDI/ABM March
1986 [1 of 3]
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WITHDRAWAL SHEET

Ronald Reagan Library

Collection Name LINHARD, ROBERT: FILES

Withdrawer

DLB 7/28/2006

File Folder MRS. THATCHER ON SDI/ABM, MARCH 1986 (1 OF 3)

FOIA

F97-013/3

Box Number 92083 *RAC BOX 9*

NICK CULL

57

ID	Doc Type	Document Description	No of Pages	Doc Date	Restrictions
27125	EMAIL	MCFARLANE TO LINHARD, RE: MRS. THATCHER'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HANDLING SDI WITH GORBACHEV <i>R 9/5/2007 F97-013/3</i>	1	10/25/1985	B1
27126	EMAIL	JUDYT MANDEL TO "SES", RE: INITIATIVE <i>R 11/29/2011 F1997-013/3</i>	1	1/27/1986	B1
27127	CABLE	DUPLICATE OF #27121; #101521Z FEB 86; LETTER - THATCHER TO REAGAN	2	2/10/1986	B1
27128	MEMO	BOB LINHARD/RON LEHMAN/BILL WRIGHT TO JOHN POINDEXTER, RE: CRITIQUE OF PM THATCHER'S LETTER OF 11 FEBRUARY	3	3/7/1986	B1
27129	LETTER	DUPLICATE OF #27123; THATCHER TO REAGAN, RE: ARMS CONTROL ISSUES WITH GORBACHEV, ANNOTATED	6	2/11/1986	B1
27130	EMAIL	DUPLICATE OF #27124; POINDEXTER TO LINHARD, RE: LETTER FROM THATCHER <i>R 9/5/2007 F97-013/3</i>	1	3/6/1986	B1
27131	CABLE	#110311Z MAR 86 <i>D 9/5/2007 F97-013/3</i>	3	3/11/1986	B1

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

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27132	PAPER	POINTS WHICH THE PRESIDENT MIGHT MAKE TO MR GORBACHEV ARISING FROM THE EFFECT OF SDI ON THE SOVIET APPROACH	2	ND	B1
27133	MEMO	LINHARD TO POINDEXTER, RE: HISTORY & CRITIQUE OF HOWE'S NOTE ON TRANSITION	3	3/11/1986	B1
27134	MEMO	JOHN POINDEXTER TO THE PRESIDENT, RE: MRS. THATCHER'S VIEWS ON SDI PAR 1/11/2012 M206/1	2	ND	B1
27135	PAPER	EXTRACTS FROM REPORTING CABLE, MRS. THATCHER'S DISCUSSION WITH PAUL NITZE FEBRUARY 5, 1986 D 9/5/2007 F97-013/3; R 1/11/2012 M08-206 #27135	1	ND	B1
27136	PAPER	CRITIQUE OF PM THATCHER'S 11 FEB LETTER PAR 1/11/2012 M206/1	3	ND	B1

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27125

From: NSRCM --CPUA
To: NSREL --CPUA

Date and time 10/25/85 15:40:57

-- ~~SECRET~~ --

NOTE FROM: ROBERT MCFARLANE

SUBJECT: Mrs Thatcher's Recommendations for Handling SDI with Gorbachev

I have sent you a paper Mrs Thatcher gave to the President in New York suggesting how he ought to present his ideas for the SDI program. In it she makes some rather far reaching proposals concerning adherence to the ABM treaty. Please staff it forward telling it like it is--that we may indeed have to pull of of or modify the ABM treaty at some point and offering your thoughts on how to modify the Thatcher proposal to make it viable. Many thanks. Please don't print this note out.

cc: NSJMP --CPUA JOHN M. POINDEXTER

DECLASSIFIED
NLS 197-013/3 #27125
BY HOS NARA, DATE 9/5/07

27126

1

From: NSJEM --CPUA

Date and time 01/27/86 17:57:20
NSFPO --CPUA

To: NSSSES --CPUA

NOTE FROM: Judyt Mandel

SUBJECT: Initiative

Based on the principle that the best defense is offense, the best counter to the Soviet propaganda offensive is a good initiative or initiatives of our own. These need not be new, as long as they are well packaged.

Our main area of vulnerability is SDI (although nuclear testing is coming up fast), and Soviet claims that SDI is an obstacle to offensive arms reductions, etc. Indeed, SDI is the alleged basis for their new proposal to eliminate nuclear weapons altogether so that defense systems will not be necessary. We could turn this around by announcing that we would be willing to agree to a pledge of no-first use of strategic nuclear weapons in the context of and in parallel with US-Soviet agreement on a transition to defensive systems. This would undercut a number of Soviet propaganda themes, i.e. that defensive systems could be used for offensive purposes, that it would be highly destabilizing, etc. It would also neatly undercut the grounds for their proposal to eliminate nuclear weapons altogether by 2000, since a pledge not to use, as they have often vociferously argued, would be stabilizing and diminish the risk of nuclear war. It could also be argued that it would be more "realistic" given the current reliance of both sides on nuclear weapons for deterrence, and the lack of trust.

The no-first use could be billed as a measure to build confidence, and it would also allow continuing to move toward greater reliance on defensive systems.

The down side that we have cited is that it would undercut NATO's strategy of flexible response and of deterrence itself, which requires some uncertainty and threat of use of nuclear weapons to deter possible Soviet conventional aggression, etc. If we specify that we are talking about Strategic weapons, and are making this part of the move to defensive systems package, it might be palatable. Moreover, it would be seen as a sign of US willingness to take Soviet proposals into account. Beside, we have already partially accepted the idea of non-use of force in the CDE context and the President has publicly said US would be willing to consider the idea.

This would have considerable public appeal (no first use of nuc weapons is near and dear to the hearts of disarmamenters and Catholic Bishops), and could form the core of a possible public diplomacy initiative to respond to the Gorbachev package.

These are raw initial thoughts. Would appreciate your reaction.
(Please do not forward this note)

cc: NSREL --CPUA

DECLASSIFIED

NLRR F97-013/3 #27126

BY KML NARA DATE 11/29/11

Bob -

This looks like it will occur on front
end of NPG ministerial - Don going -
shall we work him into the London
log?

Bill

WITHDRAWAL SHEET

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MRS. THATCHER ON SDI/ABM, MARCH 1986 (1 OF 3)

FOIA

F97-013/3

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<i>ID</i>	<i>Document Type</i> <i>Document Description</i>	<i>No of</i> <i>pages</i>	<i>Doc Date</i>	<i>Restric-</i> <i>tions</i>
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verso of pg. 2
of # 27127

Linhart
15865



**National Security Council
The White House**

System # II
Package # 90184
DOCLOG BT A/O _____

06 MAR 7 AIO: 07

	SEQUENCE TO	HAS SEEN	DISPOSITION
Bob Pearson	<u>1</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>A</u>
Rodney McDaniel	_____	_____	_____
Don Fortier	_____	_____	_____
Paul Thompson	<u>2</u>	_____	_____
Florence Gantt	<u>3</u>	_____	_____
John Poindexter	<u>4</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>	<u>A</u>
Rodney McDaniel	_____	_____	_____
NSC Secretariat	_____	_____	_____
Situation Room	_____	_____	_____
<u>LINHARD</u>	<u>5</u>	_____	_____

I = Information A = Action R = Retain D = Dispatch N = No further Action

cc: VP Regan Buchanan Other LSM/DRP

COMMENTS

Should be seen by: _____

(Date/Time)

Bob
Is there a recent Thatcher
letter on transition from
offense to defense? [Signature]

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27128 MEMO

3 3/7/1986 B1

BOB LINHARD/RON LEHMAN/BILL WRIGHT TO
JOHN POINDEXTER, RE: CRITIQUE OF PM
THATCHER'S LETTER OF 11 FEBRUARY

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TAB A

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BACKGROUND

27130

From: NSJMP --CPUA
To: NSREL --CPUA BOB LINHARD

Date and time 03/06/86 19:54:59

-- ~~SECRET~~ --

NOTE FROM: JOHN POINDEXTER

SUBJECT: LETTER FROM THATCHER

GEORGE WILL RAISE WITH PRESIDENT TOMORROW A REVIEW OF THE THATCHER LETTER. DO
A QUICK CRITIQUE OF THAT LETTER FOR ME. THAT IS THE LONGISH LETTER THAT WE
HAVEN'T ANSWERED THAT SHE WROTE AFTER THE EARLY CONSULTATION.

cc: NSPBT	--CPUA	PAUL THOMPSON	NSDRF	--CPUA	DON FORTIER
NSRBM	--CPUA	ROD MCDANIEL	NSWRP	--CPUA	BOB PEARSON

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NLS F97-013/3#27130

BY NOT NARA, DATE 9/5/07

WITHDRAWAL SHEET

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Memorandum 12

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

Admiral:

With the help of the British Embassy I have located the paper Mrs. Thatcher reportedly handed over in October at the UN. It does address the transition from offensive to defensive and the strengthening of the ABM Treaty-- a point she suggested in the meeting with the President.

It looks to me as if its primary use at this stage is a historical reference.

Peter Sommer

cc: BOG Linhard

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THATCHER LETTER
FILE

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27133 MEMO

3 3/11/1986 B1

LINHARD TO POINDEXTER, RE: HISTORY &
CRITIQUE OF HOWE'S NOTE ON TRANSITION

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NLRR M08-206 #27134
BY RW NARA DATE 1/11/12

~~SECRET~~

SYSTEM II
90184
follow-on

27134

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

21

~~SECRET~~

INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: JOHN M. POINDEXTER
SUBJECT: Mrs. Thatcher's Views on SDI

Last Thursday, George Shultz provided you a paper which he thought reflected Mrs. Thatcher's views on SDI. The paper recommended a number of very specific actions and it contained a level of detail that I found a bit out of character for the Prime Minister. After a bit of research, we have determined that the paper which George provided to you is actually a short extract of a longer paper which Foreign Minister Howe sent to George as an attachment to a message to him. Howe's message describes the paper in the following way:

This seems to tell me, albeit between the lines, that what was being forwarded is a Foreign Ministry staff paper -- vice the Prime Minister's personal view.

On February 5th, Mrs. Thatcher met with Paul Nitze and Ron Lehman. During this meeting, she provided lengthy remarks on a range of subjects. At that time, if she felt strongly about this, she could have laid out her thinking as a part of that presentation. She did not. A extract of the reporting cable outlining what she did have to say is provided at Tab A.

What is interesting about this extract, which is effectively the sum total of her direct remarks on SDI, is what is not said. Her remarks contain none of the specific detail included in the Howe paper. Nor do they include the underlying rationale for that detail which made up such a large part of her February 11th letter to you, and which cause some of us problems.

Unlike the Prime Minister's direct remarks, the short note provided to you by George proceeds from the premise that  It argues

~~SECRET~~

Declassify on: OADR

~~SECRET~~

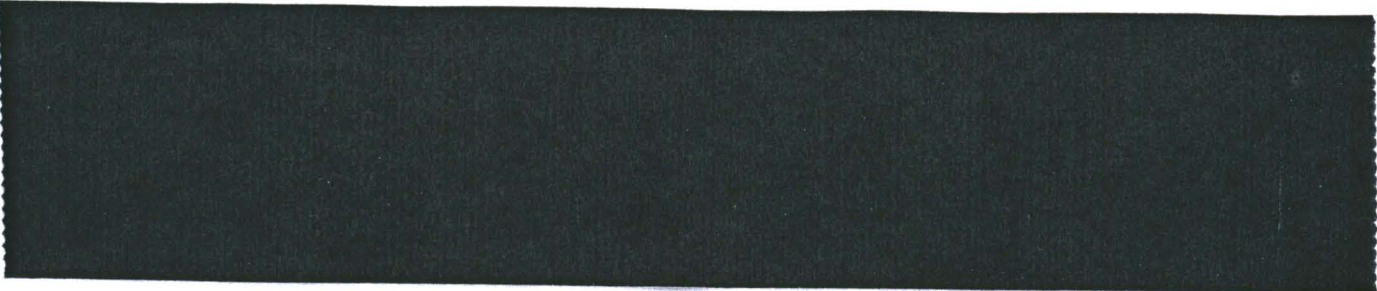
Sec. 1.4(b)(1)
E.O. 13526
Declassified

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~~SECRET~~

2

22



As you remember, we examined the idea of trading direct limits on SDI confining it only to research in return for continued offensive force reductions and rejected this because we felt that once you make progress beyond research a hostage to continued offensive force reductions, the research program will become solely an arms control bargaining chip. The SDI program is reduced to a lever to cause continued reductions; and you simply can't sustain the dynamic SDI program we envision under such conditions. In short, such an approach changes the priorities from your position that we must both achieve offensive reductions and pursue SDI to a different position in which achieving offensive reductions is given emphasis and the pursuit of SDI is viewed as supporting this goal.

The specific proposals made in the short note reinforce this shift in priority. The note suggests:



I would like the opportunity to discuss this with you further at your convenience.

Attachment: Extract (S)

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

27135

23

Extracts from Reporting Cable
Mrs. Thatcher's Discussion with Paul Nitze
February 5, 1986

The Prime Minister commented that it had been possible for President Reagan to have SDI set aside at the "getting-to-know-you" summit, but Gorbachev could not let that happen again without losing face. The President understood that, she said. Thus, we needed to find a way out of the logical impasse. The US had been saying all along that there were some limits on SDI. Perhaps you could do as she and the President had done at Camp David -- to sit down with the Soviets and show how this would all be negotiated in the context of the ABM Treaty, and perhaps give them some assurances that there will be no surprises and that they will get some warning.

Actually, the Prime Minister continued, what the US must do is to say that, in order to rid the world of nuclear weapons, you must have SDI. In the coming years, 5 or 10 states more will have nuclear weapons. Defenses will be needed as a hedge against these states. Thus, she recommended, that the US suggest to the Soviets that they do their research, and we will do our research. And certainly there was no need to involve the British and French because they are so small. Their forces are the deterrents of last resort of small nations. She added that we must look at how this all fits together in terms of numbers of nuclear and conventional weapons. The question was who has the technical capability and will. The US does.

In sum, the Prime Minister said, we were in a muddle. She did not have much difficulty with SDI, but it was a long-term issue. We should simply say that SDI research will continue, that we will negotiate, and that we will give a timetable.

~~SECRET~~

Declassify on: OADR

~~SECRET~~

DECLASSIFIED

NLRR M08-206 #27135

BY RW NARA DATE 1/11/12

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

27136

CRITIQUE OF PM THATCHER'S 11 FEB LETTER

24

On 11 February, the Prime Minister sent a letter to the President on her views on how we should react to Gorbachev's 15 January arms control proposals. The letter is disturbing to us because of what some of us read between the lines in the flow of the argument on arms control, zero nuclear weapons as a goal, and SDI. The PM devotes the majority of the letter to making the following argument:

— Gorbachev's overriding purpose at the next summit will be to stop SDI because he fears unilateral US advantage, would prefer to avoid costs to counter, and wants to use this issue to split the alliance.

— Gorbachev does not want to walk away from negotiations because this cuts his leverage with western publics. However, he recognizes the President's commitment to SDI, so he may decide to sit the President out on this issue (to the elections if necessary) by promising progress at the price of SDI.

— Gorbachev has picked up on the President's vision of a nuclear free world announced when SDI was launched. He has offered a "plan" which is dangerous. Unless key conditions are met (reduction of Soviet conventional advantage, control of nuclear proliferation), a nuclear free world favors the East. However, the real risk in Gorbachev's picking up on this theme [REDACTED]

— Therefore, to counter Gorbachev, we need to [REDACTED]

[Note: This shifts the thrust of the response away from the goal of a nuclear free world, to reductions. This logically leads to the next point.]

— In this context, then, [REDACTED]

[Note: This is a very interesting formulation. The PM argues that since we need to shift the focus to reductions (vice elimination), we must deal with SDI as a block to reductions in strategic nuclear weapons. This sudden narrowing, of course, allows her not to discuss the potential block that UK and French forces pose to INF reductions.]

— Based on this logic, the PM offers two options: roughly the current US position, and an alternative which would extend and strengthen the ABM Treaty regime in return for offensive force reductions while technically permitting SDI research to continue. Her description of this is [REDACTED]

— The PM ends her line of argument on this subject by expressing her support for this second option which, she believes: (a) does not make SDI as such negotiable; (b) would not restrict essential research; and (c) offers no Soviet veto.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

DECLASSIFIED IN PART

NLRR M08-206 # 27136

BY RW. NARA DATE 11/1/01

-- Following this, the PM turns to other subjects, including the treatment of British and French systems. With respect to these, she argues that we should not give the Soviets



The problem we have with all of the above is that, while sounding very consistent with the basic US thinking in many respects, it very well may not be consistent in its fundamentals. The key point lies in the first few elements of the argument.

-- The PM proceeds from the view that a zero nuclear world is risky for the West and that the priority must be on not undercutting public support for current strategy -- therefore, the Western emphasis must be on reductions (vice zero), and, therefore, to the extent that SDI is perceived as a blockage to this, we must find a way to not let it block reductions. The priority is on protecting public support for current strategy (and for the UK Trident program) by emphasizing reductions vice the end-goal and by avoiding having SDI perceived as a block to reductions by linking restrictions on SDI to research in return for reductions. In this context, SDI research increases leverage for reductions and serves as a prudent hedge against Soviet breakout. However, the linkage of restrictions on SDI to reductions in offensive forces places a priority on negotiated reductions vice movement to defenses as soon as our research criteria can be met. This is a key point.

-- Our position is that SDI, not just the research but hopefully the future deployments, offer the best hope for our long-term national security (and that of our allies). It is essential due to the trends in Soviet offense and defense. It is needed whether reductions are negotiated or not. Our priority, therefore, is protecting the SDI research program, and US options once the research yields results that meet the criteria we have set.

When all the smoke clears, we may ultimately have to make some move in the general direction suggested by the PM. We have internally considered this same option. In fact, it is a bit worrisome that this is very close to the position Paul Nitze has been unsuccessfully pushing for some time now (linking ABM extension to reductions). However, the key question is whether you can sustain an SDI program under such conditions. So far, our answer has been no. And, therefore, since our priority is on SDI, we have not made such a move.

When you put all this into the full context of the letter, what the letter effectively says is that the British appreciate:

- US willingness to focus reductions (which they feel essential) only on US and Soviet systems -- protecting UK systems;
- adopting their suggestions on MBFR (against our own best judgement);
- and
- our move in the chemical weapons area (however, noting further motion on verification as originally suggested by the UK is still needed).

However, after offering this thanks, the PM advises that:

- the Soviets are trying to undercut the solidarity of the Alliance via both SDI and the UK/French forces issue, therefore we can't let SDI undercut support for our current strategy (since we can't be sure that the nuclear free world will ever be in the West's interest and it also adversely affects the UK Trident program);
- we still need to work out differences on verification of chemicals;
- and, we must continue with our current policy of interim restraint with respect to SALT. [Note: On this count, it is interesting to note the majority of our problems with Soviet compliance, and certainly the most visible ones, are associated with the ABM Treaty — which the PM would have us extend.]

We would also underline the fact that this letter is in response to a specific request made by Secretary Shultz for her views on how to handle SDI at the next summit. Also, as mentioned earlier, there is a disturbing correlation between views offered by elements within our government and repeatedly rejected and the option now being proposed by the PM.

The PM's position is very understandable from the UK point of view. The bottom line, however, is that the option suggested by the PM does put the priority on achieving reductions in strategic forces and protecting the public support for current strategy (both elements related to the UK Trident issue). It does not maximize protection for achieving the promise of SDI, but rather protects the SDI research program as a lever for ensuring reductions and a hedge against Soviet breakout. The President's policy, however, does not share these priorities — it places the pursuit of the promise of SDI as a fundamental element of our long term strategy and essential to future national security — and we fear that even a viable SDI research program could not long survive in the context that would be provided by the PM's alternative.

This fundamental difference in view about the role of SDI is a problem within the Administration also.

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