

CONFIDENTIAL

DSG

NOTE FOR THE RECORD

cc: Mr. Ingham
Mr. Coles o.r.

POLAND

Before going to the meeting of Political Directors at Lancaster House this afternoon, Lord Carrington telephoned the Prime Minister. He said that all the news on Poland was bad. The Political Directors were almost certain to be unable to reach agreement on measures to be taken against Poland and the Soviet Union. Cheysson, Colombo and the Greek Foreign Minister did not want to hold a meeting of Foreign Ministers of the Ten. Cheysson in particular still felt that a meeting would be counter-productive if nothing could be agreed. But, despite this, the Foreign Ministers had now in fact agreed to meet in Brussels on Monday 4 January. Lord Carrington said that he felt this would be even worse than a meeting tomorrow: it would achieve nothing, but it would look as though it had been more carefully prepared. Meanwhile, Sir Nicholas Henderson had reported that public opinion in the United States was behind the measures that President Reagan had announced.

A further complication was that Herr Genscher had seen Rakowski, the Polish Deputy Prime Minister. Rakowski had said that the imposition of martial law in Poland was a temporary measure, that Solidarity remained in being, and that he hoped that things would return to normal when the economy had been placed on a sound footing. In short, Rakowski said exactly what Genscher wanted to hear. Genscher had reported this to Lord Carrington, who had expressed some scepticism, but Genscher still felt that Rakowski was sincere. Genscher had gone on to say that President Reagan's measures would have been an appropriate response to Soviet intervention, but were not an appropriate response to the present situation.

The question was what line to take at the meeting of Foreign Ministers. To do nothing would strain the Alliance, especially as Sir Nicholas Henderson had reported that the Americans considered that they had consulted their allies properly over the measures announced by President Reagan. On the other hand, there

/ was

CONFIDENTIAL

was most unlikely to be any agreement to match the U.S. initiative. The Ten could plump for a half-way house, but this might achieve the worst of both worlds. The least the Ten could do would be to agree not to frustrate the American measures.

In conclusion, the Prime Minister and Lord Carrington agreed that no substantive decisions could be made at the meeting of Foreign Ministers. Apart from anything else, to take measures like those announced by President Reagan would affect the interests of British industry and of many Government Departments, and it would not be possible to arrange a properly prepared collective discussion in time. The meeting of Foreign Ministers should therefore be seen as "ad referendum" to Governments, and as a preparation for subsequent NATO meetings. It might be possible to use the message from Rakowski to Genscher as an excuse for some delay.

The Prime Minister said that her initial preference was to work towards a statement by the Ten that certain measures would be taken unless certain assurances were forthcoming from the Poles about the temporary nature of the martial law regime, etc. Meanwhile, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office should produce a considered assessment of the effects on Government Departments and UK industry of taking measures similar to those announced by the Americans.

WFSM

30 December 1981