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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

30 June 1983

*John [unclear]*

Letter to the Prime Minister from  
Georges Marchais

Thank you for your letter of 20 June enclosing a letter which the Prime Minister has received from M Georges Marchais, the Secretary General of the French Communist Party (PCF). I enclose a translation.

The PCF have sent identical letters to all Western European Ambassadors in Paris and also to Eastern European Party leaders. Other Western leaders in addition to the Prime Minister will also no doubt be approached directly. Sir J Fretwell has suggested that he should merely acknowledge receipt of the letter on the Prime Minister's behalf. We endorse this recommendation. It is HMG policy not to enhance the standing of European communist parties by paying them public attention except when strictly necessary and we think it would be inappropriate for the Prime Minister to become engaged in direct correspondence with M Marchais.

If you are content with this approach we will ask HMA to proceed accordingly.

*[Handwritten signature]*

(R B Bone)  
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq  
Number 10 Downing Street

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GENERAL SECRETARY

FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY  
2 Place du Colonel Fabien  
Paris 19  
Tel. 238 6655

Paris, 14 June 1983

The Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
London S W 1  
Great Britain

Dear Prime Minister,

The high office which you hold must undoubtedly cause you to be concerned over the situation at present prevailing on our continent of Europe as a result of the arms race and the risks of seeing fresh developments in that arms race at the end of the year.

The French Communist Party has just formulated an important proposal designed to conduce to the success of the Geneva negotiations. It is for this reason that I take the liberty of writing to you to acquaint you, in the attached document, with the scope of the proposal and the reasons behind it.

I shall naturally study with the greatest interest any comments or thoughts you may wish to express on the subject.

I feel sure that this proposal will receive your full attention...

[Complimentary close]

[signature]

Georges Marchais



The French Communist Party is addressing all the governments and all the forces for peace in Europe to propose that the current Geneva negotiations be thrown open to all European governments that wish [to participate].

The profound reasons for this step are as follows :

Everyone agrees in recognising that the year 1983 represents an extremely important deadline for the peoples of our continent : either it will see an agreement allowing a start to be made on arms reduction, or it will see a new and dangerous escalation, particularly on European soil where there are already stocks of weapons whose destructive power is many times what would be needed to eliminate all trace of life.

In the nuclear age, the present situation therefore holds enormous dangers for the peace and security of all the peoples and all the States of Europe.

Moreover, a new factor has emerged with the declaration from the seven Heads of State who met at the Williamsburg "Summit" on 28 and 30 May. In effect, in setting for the Geneva negotiations the objective of "determining the level of future deployments", that declaration is to be seen in the context of the placing of further missiles in Europe and not in that of reducing nuclear weapons.

We are therefore facing a real risk of a further escalation in the arms race with the incalculable consequences that that may represent. For the future of our continent. And also for those millions of men, women and children who, throughout the world, are still experiencing hunger, malnutrition, disease



poverty [and] underdevelopment. We are thus preparing to waste considerable sums that would be so useful for work connected with life.

It is the fate of Europe that is now at stake. All the governments, all the peoples of our continent are directly concerned. It cannot therefore be left to negotiation between the United States and the Soviet Union alone when what is concerned is a matter of such capital importance as the peace, the security and the life of every country and every people in Europe.

It is this consideration and the scale of the obstacles to be overcome at Geneva that have led the French Communist Party to formulate its proposal that these negotiations be thrown open to all European governments that wish[to participate]. Naturally if, as we hope, this proposal were to be given a favourable reception, every government taking part in the negotiations would do so in terms of its own situation and the positions appropriate to it.

In that context, France's situation is highly eccentric.

A member of the Atlantic Alliance, bearing the responsibilities incumbent on it as a result of that membership, France has since 1966 withdrawn from the integrated military command of NATO.

Having subscribed to the Williamsburg declaration, it is involved in the Geneva negotiations.

There is, of course, no question of the French nuclear deterrent being a subject of negotiation at Geneva. Like every other State, France is concerned to preserve the means for its defence, its security and its independence. Those means are not open to negotiation. The French forces, which constitute one of those means cannot therefore be the subject of negotiations

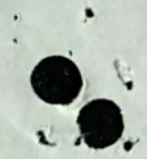


until there has been a significant advance in the process of disarmament. Only then might such a question arise.

Participation by European governments that wish to do so would enable all to be better informed about the state of the negotiations [and] the various proposals made and thus to be in a position to exert an influence in favour of an agreement on the balanced reduction of nuclear weapons in Europe. This would be in keeping with the demands of reason and with the interests of all peoples and all countries.

The French Communist Party





30 JUN 1983

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