

TRANSCRIPT B - FOREIGN SEC - PC - OTTAWA - 13 FEBRUARY 1990

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FOREIGN SECRETARY (CONT):

we decided that a long long time ago, that they did have that right and therefore it is they who trigger the whole process and that again is the importance of these elections on 18 March.

But alongside that are certain matters which are for joint discussion, which have external considerations, and what has been lacking until now is a framework, is a way in which those can actually be discussed. And now I hope that we are within sight of achieving that. We are not actually there, I have explained the tactical position, but I hope that that will be agreed. And then it will discuss a range of things and although we have our ideas I am not expounding them today because I would prefer to discuss them with others first.

But obviously the whole question of the four power status would clearly be one of those things which would need to be settled and dealt with in this new framework.

I think the key thing is not to continue indefinitely a four power relationship but to find ways of bringing it to an end which provide the Soviet Union with answers to its legitimate anxieties and that is why I have mentioned specifically in my opening statement the ideas of restricting the stationing, or not stationing, the prohibition of stationing of stationed NATO troops, non-German troops in the area now covered by the GDR.

That is an idea, it needs work on it before it becomes an agreement but it is an idea which has had a reasonable reception in several quarters and I think it is an idea which could be usefully explored.

