

**SUBJECT**

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- ① Afghanistan: Situation: PT 5.  
② Soviet Union: Human Rights Position of Disobedience  
May 1980.  
③ Defense: CTBS: PT 3.

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RECORD OF A DISCUSSION BETWEEN THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE  
PRESIDENT OF FRANCE AT THE ELYSEE ON 19 SEPTEMBER AT 1030

Present:

Prime Minister	President Giscard d'Estaing
Lord Privy Seal	Monsieur Barre
Mr. M.O'D.B. Alexander	Monsieur Francois-Poncet
	Monsieur Leclercq

Afghanistan

At the invitation of President Giscard, M. Francois-Poncet described how the French Government saw the present position in Afghanistan. It looked as though the Soviet Union had decided not to make a major effort to crush the rebellion in Afghanistan now. This would have involved doubling or trebling their present force in Afghanistan. But there was no evidence of any weakening in the determination of the Soviet Government to suppress the rebellion in due course. They now seemed to envisage a continuing effort at the present level lasting two or three years. On the political front, one of their main aims would be to exert pressure on the Pakistan Government with a view to forcing them to deal with Babrak Karmal. They would hope in this way to create a situation in which they could continue their military effort without interference. Soviet political pressure was already producing results, and the Pakistan Government were showing increasing signs of concern about Soviet intentions. Mr. Gromyko had told M. Francois-Poncet recently that "once there had been one Pakistan; now there are two; one day there might be four". The consequence of all this was Agha Shahi's proposal for a conference at which Afghanistan would be represented by the Babrak Karmal regime alone.

M. Francois-Poncet said that it was incumbent on the international community to ensure that the present situation was not accepted. Appropriate pressure had to be exerted on the Soviet Union to convince them of this. Action should be taken in the United Nations. More should be done to help Pakistan, particularly perhaps by the United States.

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/ Finally

Finally there was the question of what should be done for the Afghan rebels. The French Government's understanding was the United States was doing very little. M. Francois-Poncet understood that the American Government had discussed the question of aid to the Afghan rebels in great depth, and decided against a major effort. Mr. Muskie appeared to believe that for the American Government to give major help to the Afghan rebels would be to risk entanglement on the Vietnam model. He had also been heard to say "we do not want another Spanish Civil War situation". If this were the attitude of the US Administration, it threw a new light on the tough statements they had been making earlier in the year.

The Lord Privy Seal said that he agreed that no major Soviet effort against the rebels seemed to be in prospect. He also agreed that there was no sign of a Soviet withdrawal. Neither side seemed to be gaining much ground. Agha Shahi was showing signs of pulling back from his previous position. The British Government were trying to stiffen his resolve. We agreed that a conference attended only by representatives of Babrak Karmal would amount to recognition for his regime. We hoped therefore that if a conference were to be held, representatives of the Afghan rebels would be invited. An alternative approach would be a special meeting of the General Assembly. It would also clearly be necessary to find ways of giving more support to Pakistan. The financial support given by the Saudi Government so far had been disappointing. In general the situation was rather depressing.

On the question of military aid to the Afghan rebels, the Lord Privy Seal said that he thought the United States might be doing more than M. Francois-Poncet had acknowledged. M. Francois-Poncet said that they might be doing a little more but not much. The Prime Minister added that whatever equipment they were supplying it was not sophisticated. M. Francois-Poncet agreed and said that he had been surprised at how primitive the arms which the

Russians had displayed as having been captured from the rebels had been. The war in Afghanistan was being largely fought by helicopters. Modern anti-helicopter weapons were extremely effective. He did not understand why they had not been supplied in large quantities to the rebels. After he had left office Mr. Vance had told Lord Carrington that of the twenty million dollars appropriated for aid to the rebels only two million dollars had then been spent. If this was so, American policy was wrong. After all, if the Soviet Union succeeded in crushing the Afghan rebellion, the question of international acceptance of the Soviet invasion would be resolved. The only factor which prevented acceptance of the fait accompli was the fact that the fighting continued. It was extraordinary that the four western powers had never had a high level discussion of their strategy in the region.

President Giscard recalled that in the first half of the year the West had encouraged the Soviet Government to look for a political solution and that the Russians had briefly seemed to be considering such a solution. But time had passed, and there had been no further signs of any reduction in the Soviet military presence or of a major political initiative. The Russians seemed to be playing for time. Their threats against the Pakistan Government were having an effect. The international community had been impressed by the lack of action on the part of the West.

One useful element in the initial reaction of the United States Government had been their decision to acquire additional bases in the area. Their effort to do so should be supported. France had used her links with the Somali Government to persuade them to agree to the American request. France had a base in Djibouti. Although there was no organised cooperation between the French and American Governments in the area, there had been exchanges of views. Broadly speaking, the question of bases had been settled in a satisfactory way.

/ It would

It would also be important to keep the Afghanistan issue alive in the United Nations. There should be a debate in the General Assembly where it was to be hoped that members of the Nine would speak frankly. The idea of a special session should be discussed. President Giscard said he had no objection to the idea, but the modalities would need to be analysed. The West should try to ensure that there was a vote in the General Assembly at least as favourable as last time. The Prime Minister wondered whether such a vote was attainable. President Giscard said that no doubt some votes would be lost, but perhaps others would be gained. In any case there should be an organised effort to get out the maximum vote.

The position of Pakistan was a key one. If the Pakistan Government were to collapse or to soften its position, the situation might dissolve. President Zia was due to visit the United States in a few weeks. Perhaps he could visit Europe on his way back. The French Government had it in mind to invite him to Paris in order to give him visible support. As regards support for the Afghan guerillas, he was conscious that SAM 7 missiles had been used against French helicopters in Chad. These had been supplied by the Russians using the Libyans as cover. He did not therefore feel too many inhibitions on the principle of supplying the Afghans. Presumably the Americans were trying to supply the Afghans with Soviet made arms, but were having difficulty in finding them and in organising supply routes. The whole question should be reviewed by the Allies. We should be considering how to use the on-coming winter to supply the Afghan guerillas and ensure that they were not destroyed next year. A co-ordinated effort was needed. In response to a question from the Prime Minister, the Lord Privy Seal said that he thought some Soviet arms were getting through but not enough.

/ CSCE Review Conference

CSCE Review Conference

The Prime Minister said that President Giscard and she had agreed that in present circumstances it would be wrong to allow it to appear that the Madrid Conference had been a success. It might be that there would have to be no final communique. The West had to place its views on record about the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and about the Soviet failure to implement the Helsinki Final Act. The French Government would proceed with its proposal about confidence building measures and would insist that the area of application should extend to the Urals. President Giscard said that his Government did not accept the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and was content to be seen to be active in this connection. But he was afraid of the workings of the diplomatic machine in Madrid. Diplomats always wanted agreement. The effect of a multilateral agreement on the continuation of detente would be, in the aftermath of Afghanistan and Poland, to make it look as though the West had been deceived by the Soviet Union. The Russians, for their part, would certainly seek agreement however confused and muddled the text incorporating any agreement might be. Therefore Western participants should think in terms of a detailed discussion; of registering advances where possible; but of making it plain that there would be difficulties in agreeing a joint communique so long as basic issues were unresolved.

M. Francois-Poncet said that he agreed that it would look very strange if, after the recent blows to detente, business was continued as usual. Clearly it must not be allowed to appear that willingness to talk implied agreement. However some countries would wish to see a result. The Nordic neutrals, for instance, would want an agreement at almost any price. Moreover there were specific points e.g., the proposed conference on energy, where agreement had virtually been reached already. There was also the question of the time and place of the next Review Conference. Failing a rendezvous, the whole process might come to a halt. But it would be important to hold on to the French plan for military detente; if this was maintained in full, it would guarantee that there would be no progress on the main issues. The Prime Minister said that she

agreed about the need to arrange a further meeting. The Review Conference seemed to her valuable as a forum for criticising Soviet shortcomings. But she agreed with President Giscard about the need to avoid a final agreement. The Lord Privy Seal thought this would be one of the best ways of avoiding any impression of "business as usual".

President Giscard said that he did not see how one could reconcile "kissing in Madrid" with a hard line on Afghanistan. He did not believe that the Russians would try to sabotage the Helsinki process by refusing a further conference. They needed the conferences for their own purposes. But a joint document at the end of the Madrid meeting would not be acceptable unless it contained real concessions. There seemed to be no prospect of such concessions being forthcoming. This need not be taken too tragically. After all, the Belgrade Review Conference, which had taken place in much more normal times, had been a failure.

President Giscard asked about the attitude of the German Government. Might they not be in favour of an agreement? M. Francois-Poncet said that the stakes were much higher for the West Germans. For them the relationship between the two Germanys might seem to be at issue. But his own assessment was that they would go along with their allies. They were very strong adherents of the French plan for military detente. President Giscard said that if the Russians refused to accept the French plan it would be a major propaganda point for the West. He did not think the Russians would accept. M. Francois-Poncet said that there had been no sign whatever that they would.

/ Arms Control

Arms Control

President Giscard asked whether the Prime Minister had replied to President Breznev's recent letter about arms control negotiations. The Prime Minister said that she had and that her letter had been short and unpolemical. President Giscard said that he had replied two days previously. He had told President Breznev that France was, of course, not as concerned as the other recipients of the letter. He had said that the French Government approved the SALT II agreement; that they did not see any justification for the linkage the Soviet Government were trying to establish between forward base systems and theatre nuclear forces; and that they did not consider the American reaction to the earlier Soviet proposals had been so negative. Finally he had said that France would not participate in the SALT III negotiations although the contents of a SALT III agreement would, of course, be of concern to France.

Community Affairs

The Prime Minister said that she did not wish to discuss community matters in any detail but that there were one or two points she wished to make. The British Government hoped that the Article 235 financial agreement could be implemented without delay and without linkage to the negotiations on the Common Fisheries Policy. They would do everything they could to reach an early agreement on the CFP. An early agreement was necessary for the British fishing industry. In any case the British Government had undertaken in May to conclude the negotiations as quickly as possible. HMG were also concerned about the failure so far to conclude a sheepmeat agreement. British sheep farmers had expected an agreement by 1 October and were being increasingly affected by the absence of an agreement. It was to be hoped that the next Agricultural Council would reach an agreement: this would at least allow

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the agreement to come into operation by 15 October. On butter, it was the British Government's understanding that an agreement had already been reached. They hoped that agreement could be implemented soon.

There was also some concern about the sugar quota which had been offered to the Government of Zimbabwe by the Community. The Commission had been left with a very difficult case to argue. The result might be that Zimbabwe would refuse to accede to the Lomé Convention. This would be very serious in that it would give an anti-African flavour to the Community's policies towards the area.

The Prime Minister referred, finally, to Article 90. She said that she was aware that the French Government had decided to challenge a directive issued by the Commission under this Article. While the British Government had no difficulty with the objective being pursued by the Commission, i.e., to make state aids to industry more transparent, they did object to the Commission taking new powers which would not be subject to approval by the Council of Ministers. They would therefore be joining the French Government in challenging the Commission directive in the European Court. (It was clear that neither President Giscard nor M. Francois-Poncet were aware of the issue but that Mr. Barre was.)

President Giscard indicated that he had taken note of the Prime Minister's comments. He said that there were two matters which M. Barre might wish to pursue with the Prime Minister: the location of the Community's institutions and the renewal of the Commission.

The meeting ended at 1135.

20 September, 1980.

