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FROM BRIAN CROZIER

The Rt. Hon. Mrs. M. Thatcher, MP,
Prime Minister,
10 Downing Street,
London SW1.

4th September 1980

Dear Margaret,

I am sorry if I seem to be bombarding you, but there is quite a lot going on.

Two points for your attention:

1. Iran. To supplement the suggestions made in my letter of 29 August, a suitable climax to any strong British policy towards the present Iranian regime would be an official invitation to Empress Farah and the Crown Prince to live in Britain.
2. I enclose a summary of a rather lengthy spoken memorandum (on cassette) from our principal French associate. After translating the whole thing, I decided it was perhaps too detailed for you, although it will be useful for the next issue of TRANSNATIONAL SECURITY. The main points he makes are, however, very important and I urge you to read it in preparation for your meeting with President Giscard d'Estaing on 19 September (which I assume is going ahead).

*Best regards
Yours ever,
Brian*

4th September 1980

ANGLO-FRENCH RELATIONS: SUMMARY OF MEMORANDUM

FROM FRENCH ASSOCIATE,

dated 30 August

ms.

1. If either Schmidt or Carter is re-elected in October and November respectively (or worse still, if both are re-elected), the situation of the Western Alliance will be even worse than it is at present. The only firm elements will be the United Kingdom and France (which, as argued below, is a good deal firmer than is often supposed). It is all the more essential that an effort should be made to improve Anglo-French relations. It is important that President Giscard should be re-elected next April, as the alternatives would be disastrous. However, his prospects are by no means encouraging. A stronger Anglo-French relationship would be valuable in this context also.
2. The President's policy towards the Soviet Union. Soviet policy aims at preventing any progress towards European political unity, and any growth in West European armaments. In Africa, Soviet policy aims at spreading subversion, to bring black countries under direct or indirect Soviet control. In these three areas, the President's acts – as distinct from his words – are firm and positive.

A. Africa

(i) April 1977. When a force from Angola invaded Zaire, the French President made the French Air Force available to transport Moroccan troops to the area.

(ii) 1978. Although much criticised, even by his Belgian friends, the President sent French paratroopers to round up invaders from Angola, in a much more serious attack.

(iii) 1979. Bokassa of Central Africa opened up the country to the Libyans and the Soviets. French troops intervened and set up the Dacko government.

(iv) January 1980. The French Air Force and Navy intervened to defend Tunisia against an operation launched from Libya. Previously, the French Air Force had intervened against the POLISARIO to help Morocco.

Thus in Africa within four years, there have been five French military interventions against Soviet, Cuban or Libyan subversion. These actions brought violent Soviet protests, and a wave of demonstrations in France itself.

It is worth pointing out that in each case, the President initiated his operations in complete secrecy, through the Defence Council and without any preliminary discussion by either government or parliament. No other Western country has intervened in Africa during this period to counter Communist subversion.

B. Europe.

- (i) The European Parliament was elected by universal suffrage.
- (ii) The European monetary system was launched.

In each case, these initiatives came from France, and were strongly attacked by the Soviet Union and the French Communist Party (PCF).

C. Defence.

(i) Under a decision taken, again, in secret by the Defence Council, in 1976, France became the only European country to launch a programme to develop the so-called neutron bomb.

(ii) On 26 June, the President announced that the security of Europe was henceforth indissolubly linked with that of France itself. This was a break with the sacrosanct principles of Gaullist nationalism, and brought protests from the Gaullists as well as from the Communists.

(iii) On the same occasion, he announced plans for the production of a mobile missile launcher.

These examples appear to be the first of their kind – of a Western government countering Soviet strategy by using Soviet methods. For instance, in Central Africa, the French forces arrived at the same time as the new government which had appealed for French intervention (cf Afghanistan). All the defence measures mentioned above, although extremely unpopular, were announced during the run-up to the Presidential elections. In each case the President faced public opinion with a fait accompli. It is precisely because such measures are highly unpopular (as shown in the public opinion polls) that the President feels obliged to wrap them up in vague discourses praising detente and peace. Here again, there is a curious parallel between his methods and those of the Soviets, who will never cease talking about peace and detente, but act without inhibitions.

3. The President's much discussed meeting with Brezhnev in Warsaw in June has been generally misinterpreted as Giscard's way of preparing the ground for Chancellor Schmidt's own forthcoming trip to Moscow the following month. In reality, the President went to Warsaw to forestall any excessive concessions by Schmidt, whom he regards as the most vulnerable of all Western leaders. By going to Warsaw, Giscard cut the ground from under Schmidt's feet and deflated the spectacular aspect of the Chancellor's trip to Moscow.
4. The sequel to the President's visit merits close attention. In Warsaw itself, he called for the total Soviet evacuation of Afghanistan, and Brezhnev duly said No.

Back in Paris, the President then did the following:

- (i) He issued a communique from the Elysee, the first of its kind, announcing atomic military manoeuvres for the "global defence" of France, to be directed – as if they were the real thing – by the President of the Republic himself in his underground headquarters.
- (ii) M. Pinton, Delegate-General of the UDF (the President's own party)

publicly declared that any medals won by participants in the Olympic Games would be "blood-stained". This was the strongest of all Western statements on this theme. (Here again, Giscard was borrowing a typical method from the Communists, who often use party spokesmen for attacks against governments, while their own government continues to make soothing noises.)

(iii) At the Venice Summit, the President, along with other heads of State or government, took a firm line, demanding the complete withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan.

(iv) Back in Paris, the President called his press conference of 26 June (see above).

5. It should be recalled that during his visit to Moscow from 14 to 18 October 1975, the President was the only Western leader to declare publicly that detente must be global and must apply to ideology as well as to other aspects. This brought strong and negative reactions from Brezhnev. Since then, Giscard's line has been consistently to preach detente and peace while acting secretly and promptly when the occasion demands.

6. The Soviets and the French Communists have, of course, got the message. On 30 June, a PCF spokesman named Giscard d'Estaing as "our sole adversary, our sole class enemy. We fight Giscard because of unemployment, because of his international policy and also and in particular of his sinister and dangerous neutron bomb".

7. The re-election of Giscard is by no means certain, because of continuing social agitation (orchestrated by the PCF and the CGT), aimed at creating a general climate of discontent. It may be useful to compare the present situation with that on the eve of the last Presidential elections seven years ago:

(i) Seven years ago Giscard d'Estaing was a "new boy", who campaigned for change. Since then he has had seven years of erosion of power and popularity.

(ii) The economic situation is generally considered far worse than it was seven years ago. There are many sectional causes of discontent, which could add up to a hostile majority.

(iii) True, the Union of the Left no longer exists in a formal sense. But it may turn out to exist in reality amongst the masses of Communists and Socialist voters. In a French election, what counts is the second round, which is decisive as already demonstrated in recent by-elections. If the Socialist candidate (as distinct from the Communist) topped the poll on the first round, the second round could bring a left-wing majority to power.

(iv) A fraction of the Jewish minority will no longer support Giscard as in the past, because of France's Arab policy. A fraction of fundamentalist Catholic vote will also cease to support him because of the legalisation of abortion.

(v) At the last elections, the ruling majority (Gaullists and the group that

became the UDF) were united on the second electoral round. This time, mainly because of the deep quarrel between Chirac and Giscard, many militant Gaullists will probably abstain on the second round. It should be remembered that in the last elections, Giscard's majority was only 1.6% of the total electorate.