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Centre for Policy Studies

8 Wilfred Street · London SW1E 6PL · Telephone 01-828 1176 Cables: Centrepol London

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Prime Minister

I went to Washington for a visit of two days this week. I attach a note about it. Mr Eagleburger was no doubt out to bully us, but equally he was clearly upset. I thought Mr Weinberg shrewd & quite up to his job. I do not see why he has such a poor reputation.

Hugh Thomas

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VISIT TO WASHINGTON, December 13 - 14 1982

I was invited to Washington by the Centre for International Studies at Georgetown University to join discussions on the state of the alliance with representative persons in the Administration.

My European colleagues on this journey were Peter Shore; Maurice Faure, ex-minister, from France, Peter Corterier, ex-minister, from Germany, and General Schmuckler, ex-deputy supreme commander NATO; Alan Lee Williams, chairman of the English Speaking Union; and Brian Beedham, foreign editor of the Economist. Peter Shore adopted a consistently rational and constructive line on all the items we discussed, particularly on nuclear weapons, and even agreed that the Alliance should work out a strong co-ordinated economic policy to the Soviet Union. General Schmuckler said the worst thing (!) Germany had done in the XXth century was to destroy the British Empire!

We saw Mr Caspar Weinberger at the Pentagon on Monday December 13 at 9.30 am. Mr Weinberger said that though he might not spend 24 hours a day thinking about Europe's problems he did spend 20. He could not conceive that the US would survive without a friendly Europe. It would be "disastrous" if we came closer to destroying the alliance than we were doing at the moment. As for the 3% or 4% goal he would gladly accept it, provided it meant an increase in effectiveness: a straight 3% might well go in salaries. He was troubled by the ease with which misunderstandings could occur. Thus the recent statement of General Rogers (whom we met a few minutes later) had only been intended to say "if you are stronger conventionally, you delay the nuclear threshold". At the same time President Reagan's recent statement that if we do not have the MX there could be no point in going to Geneva really represented the truth and Mr Weinberger did not think the Russians would think it worthwhile either. After all the nuclear balance is now definitely against us.

/ He had been encouraged



He had been encouraged by the NATO Council of Ministers' support for intermediate range missiles and the possibilities of deciding on "out of area" actions. The deployment of the Cruises and Pershings was of course essential, given that there are now 344 fully deployed SS 20s, and though some are targeted eastwards they can swiftly be moved. Against them, the count was nil. Even if those missiles were established in the USSR, they could still cover all Western Europe except a thin slither of Portugal (which might please the Portuguese foreign minister but did not do much for the rest of Europe). He thought that the Russians would do almost anything to avoid the establishment of the Pershings 2.

As for ICBMs, the MX, the first new ICBM for years, was essential as a "catch-up", since the ground-based leg of the triad ("minute man") could be 95% destroyed in a first strike. Our bombers had about 2 years effective service ahead. Submarine based missiles were not so accurate and not as effective against the hardened Soviet targets. He pointed out that the guidance systems in the Russian ICBM had been made possible by the soft trade policy of the 1970s and that in turn in his mind had made the "minute-man" out of date. This was one more reason for a new economic COCOM. Another was the sale in President Carter's time of a small radar system which could defend airports everywhere. (Mr Richard Pearls, assistant secretary for defence, later said that his efforts to expand COCOM were not helped by Lord Cockfield's more orthodox trade policy to the USSR.)

Among others who spoke was Monsieur Faure who had recently been in Moscow as chairman of a (regular) French parliamentary exchange (every 6 months!) He had formed the impression that the Russians were obsessed by the Pershing 2s, and would pay very dear for the restoration of good relations with China. The Russians went out of their way to be particularly encouraging to this French delegation: bigger and more cars, grander banquets etc.

/ Mr Corterier said



Mr Corterier said in Germany the Protestant church was heading towards total opposition to the idea of nuclear weapons, with a very lavish Soviet campaign at work.

Our conversation with Mr Eagleburger, Mr Schultz's deputy in the Department of State, at 3.30 pm on the 13th was very frank and gloomy. The recent meeting of foreign ministers had admittedly shown some appreciation of the difficulties dividing the alliance but had only taken us a few feet from the brink. The difficulties in respect of credit to the Soviet Union, the transfer of high technology, <sup>4</sup>agricultural exports were not really at the stage of agreeing to investigate. Anyway, unless those enquiries led to something substantial they might well worsen things. "I cannot emphasise too strongly how we look on the question of trade with the Soviet Union!" This transcends the sale of military-related technology. All high technology should be controlled. It may be that it does not come within COCOM. Strengthen it, then.

As to <sup>missiles</sup> missile deployment of course there are too many <sup>in</sup> Europe. Many may have mould on them. But if we even gingerly suggest we start talking about pulling those out, we get attacked as being interested in decouplement. If we were on the other hand forced by the pressure of European public opinion to consider reliance only on sea-launched missiles that would represent a terrible failure. I think that would mean we would be finished with Europe. If we cannot deploy the Pershings, do not count on us to make that up with submarines. You seem to forget sometimes that we have a public opinion. That public opinion is already half convinced that we are doing everything to defend the free world and the Europeans are doing nothing. Now you say that collaboration in the Persian Gulf is essential. I agree. But to get to the Gulf we have to have bases. Greece, Spain, Portugal will let us have bases, but they will charge us - Greece \$1.5 billion! Portugal, who is the poorest, is the least demanding. Here you have Europeans asking for millions of dollars for bases for us to defend the Gulf on which Europe herself relies for oil far more than we do!

/ We Americans have



We Americans have said for 20 years that a European unity would help us - but I must say that it seems Europe is more and more inner-directed, and less and less responsible. He then returned to economic sanctions: "with all the objections which have been made about the President's sanctions in June - I must say that I spent a long time before Versailles talking to seven ambassadors - I think that, until that time, Europe did not realise how seriously we take the issue of ensuring sensible economic relations with the USSR. I know that there is a tendency in Europe to think the President is a cowboy. But this is a matter on which he is deadly serious."

Peter Shore here agreed with the general approach that economic relations with the USSR had to be more carefully worked out. (He later recognised that he had made a mistake when minister for trade in treating the USSR as if it were an underdeveloped country.) Penalty and policy should be carefully worked out.

Eagleburger then said - well, we above all recognise now that we find ourselves in competition with the USSR on a worldwide basis. Europeans say we see Communists behind every bush. But they are behind very many bushes. This is the strategic element through the whole of this decade. We have a world responsibility.

Now many congressmen are saying we are over-extended. We are expected to defend Japan as well as Europe. We are expected to give stability to the Middle East. We have to help out the Brazilian and the Mexican debt. We want to develop a military relation with Pakistan. If the Afghanistan assistance is to continue, it can only do so with the right circumstances in Pakistan. But the Pakistanis are afraid that we "will leave them as we left the Shah." Congress may be difficult over the £150 million we need for this. It is inevitable. They are worried. I am frustrated. Now we have the Stephens amendment (which tries to limit the size of US troops in Europe). We will probably defeat the Stephens amendment. But all the same Congress is unreliable.



As to Europe. " The development of co-operation in the Ten has very definitely not strengthened transatlantic understanding. The search for a European "personality" usually means that the Europeans will have made up their collective minds before we meet. Yet we do not have a Europe to deal with even though you have got far further than a group of nine nations. When we ask Europeans to discuss something they say that they have gone to enormous length to make up their minds and cannot go back on it. I feel there is an institutional problem here to which I just do not have the answer.

" On Central America Europe has got nothing to say. We are going to win there because we have got to. I do not care about the social and economic problems there, although what we have on offer is a hundred times better than what Cuba has. We have got to win. If we do not, the trouble will spread to Mexico and by the late 1980s we will have something we have not had since 1847, an insecure frontier. Instead of defending Europe we will be using our troops, including the 82nd Airborne Division, to try and keep out 15 or 20 million Mexican refugees.

December 14 at the White House, 2.30 pm.

Judge Clark, the National Security adviser.

He began by reporting an agreement which Mr Schultz had just made with Mitterand to begin the study of whether a joint economic policy can be worked out with the USSR. Mr Clark was worried lest the MX decision might decrease resolve in Europe. When asked why the US government could not issue pictures of the SS20, he said because (a) the pictures do not reveal much, (b) release would show the Russians too much of our current methods of satellite photography (one of his aides said later it was something to do with the angle of the camera). When asked whether the US could contemplate another proposal if the USSR finally rejected the "zero option", Judge Clark said he could not indicate any move away from the zero option. He was aware Andropov might be quick witted and may come forward with something dramatic: " we have a lot of people working on what that might be." One of his aides said that they knew the

/Soviet position at



Soviet position at Geneva was designed to prevent the establishment of a single new US missile. The 300-withdrawal proposal derived from adding up the British and French delivery systems and leaving them to shoulder the burden of opposing the SS20. Sven Kraemer, another aide to Mr Clark, pointed out that the US was now negotiating with the USSR in disarmament at three levels: START, at Geneva where the US had proposed a 50% cut in ICBMs and a one third cut in ICBM warheads; INF where the US had put forward the zero option; and MBFR, at Vienna. There was talk of two more (chemical weapons and nuclear tests (?)). He said that President Reagan proposed to go on insisting that (a) there should be reductions of weapons, not ceilings; and (b) verifiability of inspection, not adequate verifiability. In chemical and biological weapons, he said there had been gross violations of agreements by the USSR.

Breakfast meeting in the Senate.

Senator Roth and Congressman Bonker.

Senator Roth said that his "chief interest in politics" was "common NATO procurement policy". Otherwise we shall not be able to afford a defence policy in NATO at all in the 1990s. As for the Stephens amendment, Stephens now says he does not want a cutback to below 300,000. The perception abroad - and perceptions are sometimes more important than facts - is that it is a new version of the Mansfield amendment. Actually we ought to have the right both to withdraw and to increase our troops in Europe. The Senate remains solidly committed to the Alliance. He agreed that 1983 and the years ahead would be confoundedly difficult. Protectionism is going to be more and more attractive. No one can afford to be generous when their people are out of work. Now the US market is one of the easiest to get into in the world. The Third World was going to be very difficult. If we do not get a solution to the agricultural problem with Europe we will use our surpluses to push our sales. If the Third World is not more helpful, we will have to contemplate preferential trade legislation.

/ Congressman Bonker said



Congressman Bonker said it is becoming clear that the Soviets are smarting from some of the restrictions we have placed on them." We are after all their residual suppliers in agriculture. Re GATT I am not terribly disappointed because I did not expect more. It is a rare pleasure to have the underdeveloped world on our side. Even so I must say that the agricultural export subsidies of the EEC are the most serious problem the world now faces (!). What you are doing is to destroy the Third World's agricultural exports. It is causing us serious damage in the Caribbean and Latin America. It is really rocking Brazil. What the EEC is doing over sugar is almost unconscionable - Brazil's sugar, poultry and egg market is being ruined." We think the EEC is really bringing down "the international palace of cards" in trade.

At lunch with congressmen's assistants, the same points were made again and again: Europe and Japan look to the US for their defence but your penetration of our markets is damaging to us.

Among other discussions in the US:

- i) Armando Valladares a poet recently let out of Cuba after 22 years in prison says there is a special gallery in the prison at El Morro for Cuban soldiers who refuse to go to Africa; also that a guard told him that 30 Cuban soldiers were killed in Zaire in 1978 - you remember during the second *Zaire* crisis. Castro promised Carter that no Cuban troops had gone in!
- ii) Mr Stephen Smith, the Kennedy's brother-in-law, told me he knew lots of people in Boston who regularly gave \$200 or \$300 dollars to the IRA fund raisers (he was not at all shocked, being very Irish himself).

*Hugh Thomas*

Hugh Thomas

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