

SECRET



28 B

Copy: N. Faullig (2)

Prime Minister

A.S.C. 25/3

MO 11/9/4

NOTE FOR THE RECORD

RECORD OF A MEETING BETWEEN THE DEFENCE SECRETARY AND MR. WEINBERGER IN VILAMOURA, PORTUGAL AT 1900 HRS ON MONDAY 21ST MARCH 83

Present:

The Rt Hon Michael Heseltine MP  
Secretary of State for Defence

The Hon Caspar W Weinberger  
Secretary of Defense

HE Sir John Graham Bt KCMG  
United Kingdom Permanent Represent-  
ative on the North Atlantic Council

The Hon W Tapley Bennett Jr  
Ambassador Extraordinary &  
Plenipotentiary, Permanent  
Representative to NATO

Mr J N Blelloch  
Deputy Under Secretary for Policy  
and Programmes

General John W Vessey  
Chairman, Joint Chiefs of  
Staff

Mr R C Mottram  
Private Secretary to the  
Secretary of State for Defence

The Hon Richard N Perle  
Assistant Secretary of Defense,  
International Security Policy

The Hon Henry E Catto Jr  
Assistant Secretary of Defense,  
Public Affairs

Major General Carl R Smith  
Military Assistant to the  
Secretary of Defense

and others

INF DEPLOYMENT

1. Mr Weinberger said that there had been major increases in US defence expenditure over the previous two years, and inevitably there was now a reaction in Congress to the need for further increases. Last December, Congress had declined to fund Pershing II until there was evidence of successful test firings but ways existed to maintain





the programme and it was going well. The ground launched cruise missile (GLCM) programme was on schedule and the US Administration were happy to time the arrival of the equipment to meet the wishes of the British and German Governments. There was reasonable flexibility in the programme and the most intrusive items of equipment could be delivered as late as the beginning of November while still meeting the agreed deployment date. The Secretary of State said he was most grateful for American co-operation in adjusting the timing of the arrival of equipment. The British Government remained fully committed to the agreed deployment date but there were important political considerations over the timing of the arrival of equipments prior to this.

#### GREENHAM COMMON

2. Mr Weinberger asked about the demonstrators at Greenham Common. The Secretary of State said that they were still outside the base. There would be major demonstrations over Easter with an attempt to form a human chain linking a number of defence establishments. The campaign was well organised and the peaceful approach adopted helped to maintain public support. Should those who wanted to adopt a more militant campaign gain influence, this could help the Government by alienating public opinion.

#### INF NEGOTIATIONS

3. Mr Weinberger said that he would have nothing new to say at the NPG the following day about the US negotiating position at Geneva. He recognised that many people now wanted an offer of an interim step, although at one time everybody had wanted the zero option. It was most important to avoid public comment about the zero option. If Dr Luns said that it was not attainable, that was just what the Soviet Union wanted to hear, and he intended to make this clear privately to the Secretary General.

4. The proposal put forward by Mr Andropov was not a serious basis for negotiations. It would leave the Soviet Union with a monopoly in land-based systems, would eliminate US dual-capable aircraft in Europe, brought in the British and French deterrents, and posed an unconstrained threat to China and Japan. It was important to try to bring out more clearly the nature of the threat posed by the SS20. Despite Mr Brezhnev's claim that the Soviets would freeze the number of SS20s, deployment continued and had now reached 369 systems (the US was at present quoting in public a figure of 351). The problems posed by the mobility of the SS20 and its re-fire capability were insufficiently stressed. It was also important to avoid any suggestion that NATO needed to take a further decision before deployment could take place. The position on this was clear and the basing countries were giving their full support to deployment: The Dutch had agreed that the Americans could now carry out surveys of their GLCM site.





5. The Secretary of State said that he was fully aware of the position on the possibility of the US side making an interim offer. He entirely shared Mr Weinberger's concern about unhelpful public statements and we had responded positively to President Reagan's message about this. The difficulty was simultaneously to provide for the real defence needs of the Alliance and to maintain public confidence. The public relations aspect was crucial. Mr Weinberger commented that he had particularly admired Mr Heseltine's efforts in strengthening public support for the Alliance position. The Secretary of State said that he believed that we would find in the event that these issues were not as crucial in electoral terms as many people thought. This had been the case in the German election and he felt that it would also prove so in Britain. One difficulty he did face was that in their editorial line most British newspapers were opposed to the Government's position on dual key and it was important to be able to counter that effectively. We also needed a positive line on reductions in the nuclear stockpile in order to improve public confidence and this was why we attached so much importance to the work of the high level group. He recognised the difficulty of the US Administration in trying to present a human face to the Europeans while bringing out the nature of the Soviet threat to United States opinion. But it would be helpful if the US Administration could make clear their willingness to maintain and develop a dialogue with the Soviet Union with the proviso that this would have to be done privately. Mr Weinberger agreed with this.

6. The Secretary of State asked whether it would be possible to have a shorter break in the INF negotiations in order to emphasise our interest in achieving a solution. Mr Weinberger said this was feasible. It was not yet clear whether any new US initiative would be made before the break or immediately after it.

7. Mr Weinberger said that he was very anxious to avoid any interim offer which ruled out the zero option in the longer term. He was concerned that if the US side tabled a specific figure now such as 300 warheads, this would be rejected by the Soviet Union and further negotiations would inevitably involve higher and higher figures. Some way was needed of linking any interim figure to the ultimate zero option in order to avoid establishing numbers on a plateau which proved impossible to move away from. He was almost certain that whatever was proposed would be rejected by Mr Andropov and he was therefore reluctant to move away from zero. He recalled that at the time of the Gleneagles conference it was the Europeans who had pressed him strongly for a zero solution. The Secretary of State commented that the difficulty we faced was the impression that the West was not willing to look at alternatives and was therefore inflexible. Mr Andropov had managed to capture the initiative and the negotiating high ground. Mr Weinberger commented that it was curious how Mr Andropov's reputation in the media had changed so much since he had ceased to be Head of the KGB. He had played the hand skilfully particularly by bringing in the British and French forces on which there was no way we could respond positively. But President Reagan had made it clear that he was willing to consider any reasonable proposal.





#### REPLACEMENT OF NIKE HERCULES WITH PATRIOT

8. Mr Weinberger said that the US Government was anxious to see Patriot substituted for Nike Hercules in the air defence role. We should not seek to link this with an arms control proposal and thereby give the Soviet Union a handle on our own modernisation.

#### OUT OF AREA

9. Mr Weinberger said that, although this was more a point for the next DPC meeting, he wanted to stress the importance he attached to the question of out of area activity in support of Alliance interests. The US Government believed that the role of the rapid deployment force in the defence, for instance, of the Middle East was of vital importance to the Alliance and represented a form of forward defence for Alliance countries. The DPC had agreed to study how European NATO members might compensate within Europe for the US forces that had to be deployed elsewhere. The US Government was also anxious that some other NATO members should consider participating in the planned out of area activity itself. He hoped that progress could be made at the June DPC meeting and wanted to let Mr Heseltine know that he felt quite strongly about the issue. The Secretary of State said that he appreciated this was not a question for the current meeting. The British Government had given the RDF concept itself its broad support but it had to be recognised that it was fraught with difficulties for the European members of the Alliance.

#### OXFORD UNION

10. Mr Weinberger said that he had been invited to debate at the Oxford Union at the end of May on the motion that there was no moral difference between the foreign policies of the US and the Soviet Union. He wondered whether Mr Heseltine, as a former president of the Union, would recommend that he should take part. The Secretary of State said that he was sure that Mr Weinberger would enjoy participating but he might not wish to be involved in such a debate if there was then an election campaign in Britain. He might prefer to look for a date later in the year.

#### BELIZE

11. General Vessey said that he wanted to ask about the position on the British garrison in Belize. This was an area of vital importance to the US and he was concerned that, if the British withdrew, the Cubans would rapidly establish themselves there. The Secretary of State said that as Mr Weinberger knew we intended to withdraw the Belize garrison. When Mr Shultz had written to the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary stressing the importance that the US Administration attached to our presence in Belize, we had



SECRET



decided to look again at ways of strengthening the defence of the country. We were considering what more we could do to help in the Caribbean by strengthening our general capability before we withdrew the garrison itself but our intention to withdraw remained. Mr Weinberger commented that he had discussed Belize many times with John Nott and this had also been his position. The Secretary of State said that perhaps the Americans could interest other countries - such as Canada - in helping to provide for Belizean security. This provoked some amusement on the American side.

12. The meeting ended at 1945 hours.

Ministry of Defence

24th March 1983

DISTRIBUTION:

PS/Prime Minister  
PS/Foreign and Commonwealth  
Secretary  
PS/Secretary of Cabinet

HE Sir John Graham Bt KCMG