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Extract from a speech by the Rt Hon Francis Pym MP, (Cambridgeshire), Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, at the South East Cambridgeshire Conservative Association meeting at Hartington Grove, Cambridge, on Wednesday, 11th May 1983.

#### LABOURS'S DOUBLE DECISION WITHDRAWAL AND SURRENDER

1. Ever since the Second World War, the successive governments of this country have pursued a remarkably consistent foreign policy. This does not mean to say that foreign policy did not throw up, from time to time problems on which the two major parties had different views. But by and large there was a common perception of where the national interest lay, at least on those issues of most vital concern to us.

2. I want to mention two such issues: the recognition after the war that the only way to guarantee the proper defence of Britain was to participate in a defensive alliance with other West Europeans, and most importantly with the United States. Linked with this, was our decision to have an independent nuclear deterrent which would be under our own control. And the second major issue was the decision taken in 1961 to apply to join the European Community.

3. Though the Labour Party - and others - may have had qualms at different times about certain aspects of both

decisions, in fact all Labour and Conservative administrations have carried them out because they have seen them to be in the national interest. But it now seems that the consensus over these international issues is at an end - for the moment at least - and that we are entering an election campaign in which they will figure as major points of contention. In these circumstances I believe it extremely important that the Government sets out its position clearly and explains the reasons for it on both these basic matters.

#### BRITISH MEMBERSHIP OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

4. The arguments for Britain's membership of the European Community have been stated and restated over the past 20 years and more. They are overwhelmingly strong, and have become stronger as the years have gone by. The Community is by far the most important basis for Western European political and economic cooperation. It has made another war between Western European nations unthinkable.

5. What do others outside Europe think about our membership? Our American allies welcomed our accession and have always wanted us to stay in. Commonwealth countries were fully consulted before and during our lengthy negotiations to accede, and at the time of the 1975 referendum. Though some of the Commonwealth had some very understandable doubts, their answer throughout was clearly affirmative. The developing countries among them, who have acceded to the Lomé Convention, have reaped considerable benefits from our membership. And the old Commonwealth too accepted the reality that the earlier trading patterns of the days of Commonwealth preference were no longer valid. So who is

against our membership? Of the major actors of the world's stage, only the Soviet Union. They would like to see the Community fail, and they would no doubt welcome our departure from it if they thought it would help to achieve that end.

6. I want to look for a moment at the **advantages** Britain has enjoyed through membership of the Community:

- political cooperation between the Ten. This has not limited the scope for a national policy which we continue to pursue, but it has become central to Britain's international political identity and effectiveness. Britain's role in the Middle East, for example, or in response to particular crises such as the invasion of Afghanistan or the events in Poland, has been the more helpful and influential because we are a part of the Ten.
- a tariff-free internal market within the Community. This has promoted a huge expansion in European trade, and in Britain's trade within Europe, so that over 40% of our exports now go to other Community countries compared with about 30% a decade ago. Those who argue that the Community has ruined Britain's economy should ask themselves why so few people who have studied the Community thoroughly share their opinion, and why the vast majority of businessmen in Britain support British membership;
- Inward investment. Community membership has been a positive encouragement to foreign investment in

Britain by companies wanting a base for their European operations. Companies like Wang Computers, for instance, are building a major manufacturing plant in Scotland at the cost of £38 million; Hewlett-Packard have invested £26 million in their new Bristol plant. The Japanese firms Sony Takiron and NEC have set up in Britain since we joined the Community. This kind of investment would simply not come to Britain if access from here into the rest of Europe involved the hurdle of the Community tariff barriers. On 3 May Ford announced that its Dagenham plant would supply all its UK and continental factories with diesel engines. If Britain was outside the European Community there can be little doubt that investment of this sort would go to the continent, and the employment implications of that for Britain are in my view wholly unacceptable.

- the Community has promoted common action in response to the shared problems of traditional industries such as steel and textiles. It has been effective in using its combined bargaining power to negotiate with outside producers. All this has helped such industries to manage the agonising process of transition;

- the much-maligned programme of harmonisation of standards within the Community has helped to stimulate trade. If Britain was outside the Community we would still have to conform to such standards if we wanted to compete in European markets, but we would have no say in their formulation.
  
- there are many other advantages too, jobs and employment being far the most important.

7. Of course the Community has faults, some of them grievous. The Common Agriculture Policy operates in a very wasteful way at present. It has created structural surpluses in some commodities which at once distort world trade and threaten to bankrupt the Community. It has failed so far to discourage such surpluses. The Community's budget arrangements are quite unsatisfactory, though Britain has secured some £2000 million of refunds over the last three years and there are now - at last - real prospects of achieving sensible long-term reforms. The Community is often unwieldy, disputatious, and immensely frustrating. But that is hardly surprising considering the complexity of what we are trying to achieve together. And it certainly doesn't call into question the underlying value of the enterprise. As a member of the European Community Britain can and will do something about these shortcomings.

8. Membership of the Community should be no more an issue in this country now than the other central strands of our foreign policy such as membership of the UN, NATO or the Commonwealth. After all, the British people decided two to one in favour of Britain's Community membership in the 1975 Referendum. Surely we are not so bent on self-destruction as to imagine that we can chop and change on issues as fundamental as this every decade or so.

9. Yet there are those who are insisting on making a major election issue of the European Community. In a reversal of Shakespeare's common sense, we are told that the fault lies not in ourselves but in our stars. And the astrological scapegoat is to be the Community. Like some mediaeval demon, it is identified as the cause of all Britain's problems: unemployment, poor export performance, industrial decay.

10. And the only solution apparently, is to get out of Europe. But how? As in a detective novel, the most difficult part to invent is the end. Add together the solutions proposed by the different groups of anti-Europeans and you get an ending so tortuous that John le Carré seems like Enid Blyton in comparison. And if we did really get out, what would be the end result of this work of destruction? Britain would find that it had gratuitously put barriers in the way of 40% of its exports.

Can it really be thought that this is the way to safeguard the fortunes of a country whose lifeblood is trade? Nor would joining EFTA be a possible alternative, as Labour spokesmen have openly admitted, because those countries, including such important markets as Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Austria, subscribe to the same provisions of the Treaty of Rome which prevent us from erecting the barriers to trade which some wrongly believe would protect jobs in this country. So in reality, we would be putting at risk the 60% of our trade that is with EFTA and the Community, not just 40%. As philosophy this is Little England with a vengeance, but as economics it is more like Little Eastern Europe.

11. And why on earth should we assume that our former Community partners will not respond by acting against our exports. Needless to say, those who propose that we leave the Community do not address this possibility. Instead we hear of the sound internationalist credentials of the anti-Europeans, and of their wish for increased political and economic co-operation with the whole of Europe.

12. This is hypocritical nonsense: the policy of withdrawal and protectionism amounts to an attempt to export unemployment which is both utterly transparent and doomed to failure. The result of any such policy would be uncertainty, damage, and bitterness. In economic terms, it amounts to a proposal for mass hara kiri, and in political terms, a disruption of our relations with Europe which would long outlast the lifetime of any government which tried to put such policies into effect.

## DEFENCE

13. Let me now turn to defence. It is 38 years this month since the Second World War ended in Europe; 38 years in which two generations have grown up in peace and freedom; 38 years in which we have enjoyed a prosperity unparalleled in our history.

14. This has not been the result of some fortunate accident - of fate deciding to give the Europeans a breather after a particularly terrible 50 years. We have had peace because in 1945 we had learned two lessons the hard way: the first was that we must never again delude ourselves that peace is a cheap and easy option; and that if we leave the totalitarian challenge unanswered it will somehow go away. It won't. The second was that if the Western democracies were to survive, competition between them must give way to co-operation, or pretty soon there would be nothing worth competing for.

15. Learning these lessons was not enough. They had also to be acted on with determination. To understand the need for co-operation, to understand that wishful thinking makes war more rather than less likely, was important - and it remains important. But that was only half the battle. We had also to show the sense to do something about it. And it is because we did do something about it, it is because the Western democracies have co-operated in meeting the Soviet challenge, that we have enjoyed 38 years of peace.

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For after the last war a generation of far-sighted men built on the war-time alliance to establish the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. Among them were Attlee and Bevin. Can the same men of stature really be found in today's Labour Party? Do Michael Foot and John Silkin have the same vision and understanding as Labour's post-war leaders? How easily Mr Foot overlooks the Soviet threat - a threat that has grown not lessened since 1945. Indeed he even appears to have forgotten that he was the Deputy Prime Minister in the last Government which decided as late as April 1979 that NATO needed to modernise its nuclear weapons in response to the Soviet SS20s. And to modernise the Polaris warhead so that our strategic deterrent continues to be effective.

16. We might well wish that Clem Attlee or Hugh Gaitskell led the Labour Party today; instead we have a dreamer, a man who would throw away everything that post-war governments of both parties have sought to build, for both have done more than just subscribe to the idea of a common defence where before there was none. They have faced up to the need for a strong and effective defence. They rejected the wishful thinking of the 1930s which, far from saving us from war, did much to make it inevitable. Successive governments have known that British security must rest on membership of NATO, on strong conventional defence, and on the maintenance of an independent nuclear deterrent of the minimum size necessary for credibility. It has proved a brilliantly successful formula.

And yet it is now under challenge by those opposed to intermediate range nuclear forces; by those calling for unilateral nuclear disarmament; by those advocating the removal of US military bases from this country; and by those who call for a reduction in conventional defence spending. In short, the very policies which have helped to keep the peace in Europe for the longest period in this century are now being called into question by a minority of wishful thinkers who are ready to play fast and loose with our security.

17. The Labour party is among that minority, as their pathetic document 'No Hope for Britain' reveals. A future Labour government would not only abandon our nuclear deterrent, it would also reduce our level of defence spending to the European NATO average. Since this would mean cutting our expenditure by more than £4 billion a year, and the savings from their proposed cutting of our nuclear programme would account for only 10% of that, it becomes clear that Labour would inflict fatal damage on our ability to defend ourselves. Michael Foot has good reason to begin writing letters to Mr Andropov; he will need friends in the Kremlin by the time his administration has finished with Britain's defences.

18. I want to consider with you for a moment some of the aims and arguments of those urging us to abandon the well-tryed and proven policies of the last 30 years; and let us start with the debate about cruise missiles.

Those who argue against the deployment of cruise missiles do so for a variety of reasons: some say they are unnecessary; some that they will make us more of a target; and some that if we desist from deployment, the Russians may follow our example and dismantle their SS20 missiles. The reasons may differ, but they all have one thing in common. They are wrong.

19. The determination to deploy cruise and Pershing missiles is necessary because at the moment this country and the rest of Western Europe is threatened by well over 300 SS20 missiles - each with 3 nuclear warheads. We cannot leave this threat uncountered. To do so would be to allow the Russians a monopoly of intermediate nuclear range missiles which would in turn leave Western Europe dangerously exposed to Soviet military and political blackmail. It would leave a gap in our deterrent capability. It would reveal a lack of military and political common sense on our part which would gravely undermine the credibility of the Alliance, and jeopardise the stability in Europe on which peace depends.

20. To suggest that by deploying cruise missiles in this country we shall make ourselves more of a target is fallacious. Britain is of vital strategic importance whether or not we have cruise missiles here. We cannot alter this simple fact by refusing to accept one particular category of weapon. To suppose we can is wishful thinking of a particularly dangerous and foolish kind, and wholly misleading.

21. And it is wishful thinking too, to suppose that if we renounce INF, the Russians will follow suit. The evidence that this is nonsense stares us in the face. For the last 5 years the Russians have been deploying intermediate range nuclear missiles, while NATO has not deployed one single one. The absence of INF on our side

has done nothing to persuade the Russians to do away with their own INF capability. On the contrary, they have gone on deploying more and more SS20s, apparently in the hope that they could establish an unanswered monopoly of this category of weapons. It is only now that NATO is on the verge of meeting this threat, by deploying intermediate range nuclear missiles of its own, that the Russians at last show signs of being willing to discuss the issue seriously. The message is clear: the Russians do not respect restraint; they are unimpressed by moral gestures; but they do understand determination and, when they see determination, they are prepared to negotiate - but not before.

22. Exactly the same argument applies in the case of our nuclear deterrent. The wishful thinkers claim that if we abandon our nuclear deterrent, we shall set an example which others will follow. What a gamble with our security! How do they know? Why should others follow, especially when we have Mr Andropov's own word for it: that unilateralism is a naive approach to nuclear disarmament.

23. The only way we can hope to ~~reduce nuclear~~ weapons is through multilateral agreements. We all want that and no-one more than this government. As the INF issue demonstrates so vividly, the Soviet Union will only negotiate seriously when we have something to negotiate with. The Russians will not take more notice of us if we renounce nuclear weapons unilaterally; they will not take any notice of us at all.

24. And lastly, what about those wishful thinkers who say in one breath that all American bases should be removed from the UK but, in the next, say that we should retain our membership of NATO? Perhaps they are not wishful thinkers; perhaps they are just plain hypocrites. For what they want is the security afforded by the US nuclear guarantee while pretending that they have renounced the nuclear option. There is no such thing as a non-nuclear defence policy inside NATO, however much the hypocrites seek to disguise the fact. In the last analysis, the Western democracies must maintain the nuclear option if they are to maintain a credible deterrent in the face of the Soviet military threat. And note the word deterrent: we need nuclear weapons to prevent war, not to go to war. It is utterly hypocritical to look to the Americans to provide this deterrence while at the same time insisting that there must be no US nuclear weapons stationed on British soil.

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25. The wishful thinkers would condemn us to forget the lessons of recent history and would gamble with the peace that we have enjoyed for two generations. War is no more likely now than it was 5 or 10 years ago. But it may well become so if our resolution weakens and we turn our backs on the policies which have safeguarded our prosperity and our security for more than 30 years. We must not do it; we shall not do it.

26. The Conservative Party will adhere faithfully to these principles. The responsibility of protecting our realm, of safeguarding our freedom and civilisation is daunting indeed. But we shall match up to that responsibility. We shall not waver in our resolve to do whatever is required in pursuit of those over-riding national and international objectives - the safety of the realm and the prosperity of the people.

END.