

Head of Chancery

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Anglo-German Consultations

The Secretary of State had half an hour's talk with Herr Genscher before the Plenary this morning. Private Secretaries and Herr Genscher's Interpreter were also present. I attach a summary record. I shall be sending copies to Mr Coles (No. 10) and to PS/Mr Nott and arranging for an appropriate distribution in the FCO.

BJP

(B J P Fall)
Private Secretary

29 October 1982

cc: Bonn
HM Ambassador
Mr Mallaby
PUS
Sir F Cooper

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Anglo-German Consultations:

Meeting between Mr Pym and Herr Genscher,
from 9.15;9.45 on Friday 29 October

1. Herr Genscher gave an account of the recent German discussions with the French on defence and security policy. These subjects were explicitly referred to in the Franco-German Treaty but had not previously been discussed as the time had not been thought to be right. President Mitterrand had suggested in February that these matters should be taken up between the respective Defence and Foreign Ministers and the Germans had agreed. But there had been no follow-up and the French had returned to the charge in May. Once again however no dates were fixed for a meeting until the Chancellor and Herr Genscher had gone to Paris on 5 October.
2. Herr Genscher said that the Germans were interested to talk to the French about defence policy as much as possible, given that French troops were stationed in Germany but not integrated in NATO. This inevitably gave rise to questions. Herr Genscher said that the French were clearly giving thought to the place of German territory in their defence policy: should it be regarded as a glacis, or should they regard the French security frontier as being the eastern boundary of the Federal Republic? President Mitterrand seemed to be veering towards the second concept which was a very positive thing. The French were also considering a restructuring of their forces in Germany and the possibility of re-deployment towards the north. At present, in the south-west, they were in the position of least danger.
3. Genscher said that the Germans had found the discussions of particular value and had told the French:
 - i. that it was important that French troop strength should be maintained: restructuring must not mean reducing;
 - ii. the Germans understood the French position about participation in MBFR;
 - iii. French and British systems must not be included in the negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union;
 - iv. Germany did not have and did not want nuclear weapons;

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- v. France and Germany were both members of the western Alliance and knew that their alliance with the United States was vital to their security.

The Germans would continue the discussions with the French on this basis: there was no change in the German position. They would also discuss arms exports, as they did with Britain.

4. Genscher suggested that one reason for the French initiative was President Mitterrand's concern about German public opinion: he was worried about pacifist and neutralist tendencies. The change of Government in Bonn may have done something to calm French apprehensions. Genscher had told Cheysson and Herpu that the French could help to influence German public opinion: the interview which President Mitterrand had given to Stern - in which he had emphasised the need to fulfil both parts of the NATO dual decision - had had quite an impact on German public opinion, coming as it did from a Socialist Head of Government.

5. Genscher said that he had brought up in the talks the importance of the rest of the world to the security of Western Europe. The Germans had a position between that of the Americans and the French on Central America, and were very concerned not to create difficulties with the Americans in this context. The area was one of particular concern to Genscher personally: we must never forget that the withdrawal of Soviet ships from Cuba had been bought in exchange for the withdrawal of US weapon systems from Europe, and that we would be in less difficulty over stationing now if that had not happened. Genscher went on to say that he had told Mr Haig in April that Europeans could help to secure economic stability in Central America: this was a European interest, as well as the way of helping the United States. In Genscher's opinion the Soviet Union was pursuing in Central America a global strategy. They would like in the medium to long-term to bring about a position where public opinion in the United States regarded the Soviet interest in Western Europe as analogous to the US interest in Central America and where some sort of bargain between the super-powers might be struck on this basis. This was not for tomorrow, but it was dangerous. Western Europe should therefore take Central America seriously and work for a common understanding with the United States.

6. In conclusion, Genscher said that the talks with the French had not been sensational. The most striking thing was that it had taken 19½ years for them to get under way.

7. In response, Mr Pym said that the logic of what the

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French appeared to be saying pointed to integration within NATO, but it seemed that they still had reservations. Herr Genscher agreed. Mr Pym said that he continued to think that NATO ought to stand back and consider the logic of its present troop deployments in the light of the current threat, but he realised that member countries found it difficult to face up to the possible need for change. Meanwhile, he agreed that it was important that any restructuring of French troops should not lead to reductions. He wondered what the French had in mind when they indicated the possibility of re-deployment towards the north, and whether this was designed to help the Alliance or to help the French. The French clearly had reservations about the idea of making their security frontier the eastern boundary of the Federal Republic but a change in that direction would certainly be welcome. Herr Genscher said that the French seemed to be considering two points in particular: the problem of their shorter range missiles, which if launched could not go beyond the territory of the Federal Republic; and the question of whether to produce the neutron bomb and, if they did, whether to deploy it with French troops stationed in France or with those stationed in Germany.

8. Mr Pym pointed out that the French spent relatively very much more on their nuclear weapons than we did and their conventional force was based on a conscript army. Their reliance on nuclear weapons was quite different in degree from ours. Herr Genscher agreed that any improvement in the French conventional capability would be very welcome. Mr Pym said that we would continue to modernise our own conventional equipment. He would take the occasion of his next meeting with M. Cheysson to explore French thinking further.

9. Mr Pym emphasised the importance of continuing calmly but firmly to implement the dual decision. It was important that the Americans played their hand with due regard for political sensitivities in Europe. The Russians for their part would do their best to mobilise opinion against deployment. Herr Genscher agreed and said that the main Soviet thrust at the moment was to suggest that cruise missiles only be deployed and Pershing set aside. This was highly political, because if Pershing was set aside the FRG would not be involved in the first round of deployment and this would make life impossible for the Italians.

10. In conclusion, Herr Genscher wondered whether it might be useful at the Press Conference to say something about the exclusion of the British nuclear capability from the US/Soviet negotiations to match what had been said in respect of the French at the end of the Franco-German Summit.