

Addressed to C.R.



With Compliments

I'd be v. glad if you'd give
these two papers to the PM.
The first is not a surprise to you

Hugh

HOUSE OF LORDS
LONDON SW1A 0PW

MS



Prime Minister

CDP

7/2.

Prime Minister

At breakfast this morning, Dr Henry Kissinger told me that he thought the S.D.I. was the only way out of our nuclear dilemma. In the long run he believes we will not be able to sustain a defence based on the idea of launching a nuclear attack in response to a conventional war. Even now he doubts if anyone around President Reagan would advise, say, a nuclear attack on Kiev in response to a Russian takeover of Berlin: particularly not Nancy Reagan who, in his opinion, would be the determining voice if she were around at the time when the President had to take a decision of this nature (and she would make it her business to be around). In the long run, he thought that Western public opinion would be certain to move towards unilateral nuclear disarmament. Not, of course, with you as Prime Minister and with Reagan as President, but in the long run. Strategic defence was a way of avoiding this.

Dr Kissinger thought that the most likely outcome from a successful series of negotiations at Geneva over arms control would consist of some version of SALT II which would differ from that old negotiation enough for Reagan to claim that it would be a new departure, but perhaps merely *at best* limit warheads to something like three-quarters of their present level. On I.N.F., in which the Russians have lost interest because of S.D.I., there would be some token withdrawals. As part of the package there would be a moratorium on both testing and deployment of S.D.I. which he personally thought would be a great mistake since, he argued, the West has never reneged on a moratorium or anything. (After the discussion it occurred to me that the new American bomber might be an exception to this).

The benefits of S.D.I., as Dr Kissinger saw them, were not only the above but that although, of course, the Russians would always be able to penetrate a shield of the sort envisaged, they

.../ would



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missiles would get through

would not know which ones they were. He did not accept that the Russians were more dangerous when they were worried, as the European conventional wisdom seems to suggest. On the contrary, he thought that it was only when they were worried that they came to the negotiating table. He had heard, of course, of the hesitations caused by S.D.I. in the minds of Europeans on the grounds that it might threaten the "balance" between West and East, but had there ever been a time before when statemen were worried about such an imbalance when it was in their own favour?

Dr Kissinger wanted to congratulate you on what he took to be the outcome of the miners' strike, and thought this was a great victory not only for sanity but for the principle of resolution in these matters.

The principal occasion of this breakfast, you might like to know, was that Henry Kissinger is hoping to be able to put at my disposal all his collected papers, now in the Library of Congress, for a study which I am envisaging on US foreign policy in relation to the Soviet Union. He has, however, not found a way of giving me, a foreigner, access to these papers without making them available to all his enemies!

Hugh Thomas

Note: he thought Jean Kirkpatrick was a real possibility for Secretary of State if & when George Schultz steps down (in the summer of 1986); & for the Vice Presidency in 1988.

LORD THOMAS

February 6, 1985