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NOTE FOR THE RECORD OF A MEETING WITH DR MANFRED WOERNER
AT THE GERMAN AIR FORCE BASE AT FASSBERG AT 1500 HOURS
ON MONDAY 17TH FEBRUARY 1986

Those present:

The Rt Hon George Younger MP Secretary of State for Defence	Dr Manfred Woerner German Defence Minister
Sir Julian Bullard HM Ambassador, Bonn	Colonel Reinhardt PSO to Dr Woerner
ACM Sir Patrick Hine Vice Chief of the Defence Staff	Captain Hundt Press Secretary
Mr J K Ledlie Chief of Public Relations	
Mr R C Mottram PS/Secretary of State	

Opening Remarks

1. The Secretary of State said that he had been anxious that his first visit overseas should be to British Forces Germany, and that, as part of this, he and Dr Woerner should meet. He hoped that they could establish a close personal relationship. He wanted to emphasise that the British Government's commitment to the stationing of our forces in Germany remained as strong as ever, and that he fully supported European collaboration on defence equipment, as he had made clear at the recent IEPG R&D Directors Conference.

2. Dr Woerner said that he much appreciated these comments. He believed that the Anglo-German defence relationship had been strengthened in recent years and he wished to continue this process. Germany also had a close relationship with France but this need not effect the Anglo-German relationship. He was particularly pleased that Mr Younger had given such a clear commitment on British Forces in Germany since the German Embassy in London had reported recent remarks in the House of Commons suggesting possible reductions in BAOR. The Secretary of State said that there was nothing new or significant in these suggestions which came from back-bench MPs.



Westland Helicopters

3. Dr Woerner said that it would be helpful to know the approach of the British Government now Westland had proceeded with a Sikorsky minority shareholding. In his earlier discussions with Mr Heseltine, his primary concern had been that Sikorsky would seek to insert their Blackhawk helicopter at the expense of the NH90 programme. He wondered about the attitude of the British Government to the future of the NH90. The Secretary of State said that he had not yet had an opportunity to discuss with Sir John Cuckney the way ahead as seen by the company. The British Government saw no need for, and did not wish to have, any rigid divide between Westland and the other European helicopter manufacturers solely because of the Sikorsky minority shareholding. They would wish to encourage Westland to continue to co-operate in European ventures, but he was not yet able to say how this might best be achieved.

State of the Alliance

4. The Secretary of State said that he would be interested in Dr Woerner's views on the present health of the Alliance. So far as the British contribution was concerned, there would be slight real term reductions in the defence budget after 1985/86. We hoped to achieve the same output by new procurement policies designed to get better value for money. But some difficult decisions would need to be taken on programme priorities.

5. Dr Woerner said that he believed that the Alliance was in a satisfactory state. The Alliance had maintained its cohesion over the dual-track decision on the deployment of cruise and Pershing II missiles. He believed future attention would focus on the conventional defence initiative. This was necessary to raise the nuclear threshold. It was also very clear that the Soviet Union now recognised that it was not feasible to achieve victory in a nuclear war and was itself looking increasingly for conventional options. Moreover, there would remain very heavy pressure from the US Congress on the Administration over burden-sharing. Senator Nunn had emphasised to him that he was prepared to reintroduce his amendment at any time that he concluded it was necessary to do so.

6. Dr Woerner said that he was particularly concerned about the extension of air defence to deal with the threat of ballistic missile attack. This was not a programme for tomorrow or even the day after tomorrow, but we had to recognise the increasing Soviet capability for missile attack on lines of communication, airfields and nuclear sites without the use of nuclear weapons. It was right to address how our air defences could be extended to deal with this threat. He did not see this as a space based programme. Nor should it be attempted without the Americans given the financial and technical difficulties involved. While some technologies associated with the SDI research programme might also be relevant to this programme, it



was important to avoid the implication that we were looking for a European SDI: this would help the French who had recently shown a more open-minded approach to his ideas.

7. The Secretary of State said that he understood that Dr Woerner had set down his ideas in an article in the Strategic Review which he looked forward to reading. He was content to keep these matters separate from SDI participation although there could be a spin-off from that work. He thought that any capability of the kind envisaged would be very expensive. Dr Woerner emphasised that this was a long term problem. Although he had funds available for studies and for research, there was nothing in his long term planning, which ran to 1999, to fund any procurement. There might need to be a change in priorities. It was possible that, looking 10 years ahead, options would open up for example by extending the capability of Patriot. His essential point was that these capabilities were already being developed on the Soviet side with the SA12 and the threat posed to the West could not simply be ignored. Air Chief Marshal Sir Patrick Hine said that there were a number of potential responses to the threat involving active or passive defences or a mix of the two. It would be helpful to have a bilateral exchange before these issues were addressed in the Alliance. Dr Woerner welcomed this proposal.

Chemical Weapons

8. The Secretary of State said that his initial briefing by British Forces Germany had emphasised the strong military case for a retaliatory capability against the Soviet chemical warfare threat. On the other hand, there were clear political sensitivities. Dr Woerner commented that any British political sensitivities could be doubled in the case of Germany. He could not conceive of opening a public debate about equipping the Bundeswehr with such weapons. The German situation was special because there was already a considerable stockpile on her territory of old-fashioned US weapons. The approach to be adopted on the NATO force goal had yet to be addressed in the Federal Security Council but he could offer some personal observations. He believed his Government would not oppose a sovereign US decision to replace out-dated weapons with safer, more effective binary munitions. They would hope to establish in bilateral talks a timeframe for the removal of the older weapons. He understood that the US Administration did not intend to base binary weapons in Europe but there would obviously have to be contingency planning for deployment in a period of tension. The FRG could not be the only country singled out for such basing. It was also important that there should be no attempt to see chemical weapons as an additional escalatory option, a fourth level of capability. Finally he would want the delivery options to cover both short and longer ranges: if there were to be a Soviet chemical attack on an airfield in West Germany, there should be options other than retaliating on an airfield in East Germany. The Secretary of



State suggested that deployment might be coupled with a commitment to no first use. Dr Woerner agreed with the concept but said that it would be important not to use a form of words associated with the nuclear debate. Air Chief Marshal Sir Patrick Hine asked whether Dr Woerner saw deployment of binary munitions in war being limited to US troops or spread more widely and whether the new munitions might replace the old in Germany. Dr Woerner said that these were very difficult questions but there was no possibility of replacing the old with the new. He felt that, in carrying forward the deployment of cruise and Pershing missiles and the extension of conscription, the German Government had taken enough brave decisions for the present.

Arms Control

9. The Secretary of State said that the proposal in Mr Gorbachev's latest offer that there should be no modernisation of the British deterrent was completely unacceptable to the British Government. The British Government would accept an agreement involving zero LRINF in Europe, since it was declared Alliance policy; but he would prefer the interim proposals put forward last year which provided for some deployments of Cruise and Pershing II missiles. Dr Woerner said that because he had been out of the country, he had only had a limited input to the German approach in Alliance consultations. His own personal view was that an INF agreement of the kind envisaged should be accepted provided there were adequate verification arrangements, the United States reserved the right to counter-balance SS20s in Asia, and that there were tight collateral restrictions on shorter range systems. Speaking very personally, he saw the attraction of an INF agreement which preserved some Western deployments. He did not want to press Britain in any way to accept Gorbachev's proposals on the modernisation of our deterrent.

Spain and NATO

10. There was a short discussion on the desirability of contacting Fraga over the Spanish referendum reported in Bonn telegram No 125.

Training Areas

11. Dr Woerner said that there was increasing pressure from the German public over the impact of training by allied forces. There were some 100,000 low flying missions a year and in some cases 2,000 overflights annually over 1 square kilometre of territory. Because of pressure in the Bundestag, some additional measures had to be taken. There had, he knew, been exchanges between air staffs which made some useful progress but the German population was less and less willing to accept that there should be different rules for allied air forces compared



with the German Air Force. In the case of Army training areas, the German Government would continue to accept its Treaty obligations. He hoped that it would be possible to introduce a formal summer break, that there could be no military deployments on Sundays or holidays, and that training could keep well clear of villages. Chancellor Kohl had touched on these matters at the last Anglo/German summit. He believed that they should charge their military staffs to see what compromises might be possible.

12. The Secretary of State said that he was very happy to proceed in this way. He was sympathetic to Dr Woerner's concerns and would ensure that the approach on our side was constructive. In the case of low flying there were certain minimum requirements if training was to be properly conducted. We had a similar problem in the United Kingdom and would certainly not ask the German public to accept anything we did not ask of our own population. Dr Woerner commented that he had a great deal of respect for the Royal Air Force but the problem was that it was just one of a number of allied air forces operating in Germany. There might possibly be scope for relief by establishing a NATO training area in Turkey but the machinery for addressing this was very slow. Air Chief Marshal Sir Patrick Hine pointed out that the Royal Air Force was already doing a substantial amount of its training outside Germany including conducting all Tornado night flying in the United Kingdom. We were prepared to meet the spirit of the 50 minute restriction on each low flying sortie by accepting lower limits on other aircraft to compensate for the need for Tornado to exceed the limit. It was of interest that there were more low level sorties in the United Kingdom than in Germany and we had to tackle more complaints. Dr Woerner was clearly very surprised to learn of these statistics and said that they changed the picture somewhat!

13. In further discussion of the possibility of establishing a training base in Turkey. Dr Woerner confirmed that he would prefer a multilateral approach rather than a bilateral one. It was suggested that there might be a linkage with the possible sale of Tornado to Turkey. Dr Woerner said that the problem had not been addressed so far in these terms.

EFA

14. The Secretary of State said that he was determined to put maximum pressure on those concerned within Britain to live within the weight limit for the European Fighter Aircraft which had been agreed at Turin. Dr Woerner warmly welcomed this. He referred to the painful history of the negotiations: he was firmly committed to the limits finally agreed which were a matter of credibility for him. He could not accept the increased costs which went with greater weight. The problem with industry was that they thought that once a political



decision had been taken, they could then proceed as they saw fit. EFA was still in the definition phase and he retained a number of other options.

SP 70

15. The Secretary of State said that he was very anxious that we should now get on with the SP 70 programme, following the NADs audit. He was concerned that we should not be beguiled by the experts into seeking further improvements which would put back the in-service date. Britain had to have SP 70 quickly. Dr Woerner said that he found it incredible that it had not been possible to produce this equipment after 15 years. He was as interested as Mr Younger in early completion of the programme. But since SP 70 would now not be in service until the early 1990s, it would not be right to introduce then a weapon based on the technology of the early 1970s. Whilst he was not interested in a totally new development he believed that we should introduce more recent technology where this was possible. Air Chief Marshal Sir Patrick Hine said that the important point was to put right the ammunition handling system. We did not want to see the development programme extended in order to accept changes elsewhere. Dr Woerner said that in principle he agreed. But we could not proceed with outdated technology. He would look further into the matter which they might discuss again in the margins of the NPG meeting in Wurzburg.

Nimrod AEW

16. The Secretary of State said he wanted to tell Dr Woerner very confidentially of the position reached on the Nimrod AEW project. Regrettably the performance of the system fell a long way short of being satisfactory and it would be necessary to look at alternatives. The Government had yet to reach a view on the future of the Nimrod project itself. They were committed to meeting the AEW requirement. Dr Woerner said that he was grateful to be informed in this way. He was of course concerned that the British contribution to NATO's AEW capability should be provided.

Anti-Radar Drone

17. Air Chief Marshal Sir Patrick Hine said that we were addressing the options for a shorter range anti-radar system. It would be very helpful if there could be detailed talks on the specifications envisaged for the anti-radar drone. Dr Woerner welcomed this.

18. The meeting ended at 1640 hours.

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20th February 1986



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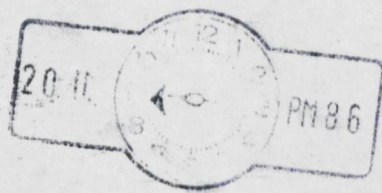
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Paras 11-13

ACGS ACAS
Hd GS Sec
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Paras 14-17

MA/MGO
PS/CA
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AUS(EC)
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of trust,

Certainly the Turks had been through a difficult time on human rights etc. But it was time to solve the question of their Presidency of the Council of Europe. The key date for the FRG was 1 December, and of course the existing commitment on Turkish immigration was not acceptable in its present form. The FRG was ready to discuss many things with Turkey bilaterally, and to do "something unusual" in the field of military aid. The Community should look at the question of financial help to Turkey. The point was for the EC to start to deal rationally with this important country, no matter what certain of our partners including France might say.

6. I said that if Kohl could win over Mitterrand when he saw him tomorrow, this would be a big achievement. Kohl said there would not be much time: he was only going for "this tree thing". (Comment. This did not sound as if a secret mini summit was being planned.)

7. The big task for the EC this year, I said, was to bring the CAP under control, resist pressure from the mediterranean states and create the financial resources with which to tackle non-agricultural tasks eg research and technology. We should need a common strategy for this, and Britain wanted to send over one or two key officials before or soon after Easter to discuss this with their German opposite numbers. Kohl welcomed this suggestion.

Transatlantic Relations

8. I described this as a second area where close Anglo-German cooperation was required. We needed to minimise points of friction in a year when crucial arms control talks would be in progress. Kohl commented that he wanted to bring the SDI affair to a rapid conclusion as far as Germany was concerned.

9. He expressed disquiet about rumours of moves in Washington to fix the parity of the dollar, which he described as protectionism in another form.

Libya

10. Throwing down his folder, Kohl said he had a lot of sympathy with the US position on terrorism, wherever there was an incident there always seemed to be an American among the victims. But they were a bit neurotic about it. The spirit of Theodor Roosevelt was still abroad. Kohl personally thought that the key lay in better collaboration to defeat terrorism by professional means. This could not be done by large committees. Why did we not bring together the key countries; the USA, Canada, Britain, France and the FRG, Switzerland and (Kohl would add) Israel? In such a group it might be possible to commit ourselves to go to the absolute limit in providing mutual help up to and across frontiers. Mitterrand knew of these ideas and supported them. Far-reaching methods were needed. The cooperation at present was far from 100% effective. It was no good imagining that terrorism in another part of the world was harmless to ourselves: this was like the Palatinate ignoring plague in Prussia in the Middle Ages.

11. Reverting to Libya, Kohl said that the US had invested too much national prestige in the matter. Germany had nothing to be ashamed of. It had reduced the level of Hermes credits from DM 13 million to DM 5 million. But there were 1500 Germans in Libya. Kohl had no means of compelling them to get out, nor any means of rescuing them if say 50 of them were arrested tomorrow by Ghadaffi, whereas the US had the Sixth Fleet in the offing. Charges of cowardice could not be made to stick. He would talk to
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the Americans about cowardice and its opposite if and when they introduced national service and extended it to 18 months. "There is a dividing line". Friendship with the United States did not mean that one had to endorse everything proposed. It was ludicrous that Whitehead had given the best marks to Italy for promising to stop selling arms to Libya, a thing which the FRG had never done.

Tin

12. I said I was under instructions to speak very seriously about tin, and I did so, following FCO telno 58 and emphasising that if we produced a counter proposal with an unrealistically low figure in it, there was a risk of negotiations collapsing litigation starting and Western governments having to spend far more than under the kind of arrangement which could be available through negotiation. I earnestly hoped that the FRG would pull its full weight in this.

13. Kohl looked completely blank although he listened. I got the impression that his staff had failed to brief him although tin was on our list. So I told Kohl I would send him a paper and we have this afternoon done so.

Berlin

14. I asked how seriously we should take the corruption scandal. Kohl said with feeling that Berlin was a ghetto. It had far too many lawyers and architects and not enough for them to do. There were not even enough traffic accidents to go round. Then there was the fact that the Senat owned so much land, and that Bezirke had so little authority of their own. On top of that there was the system of Proporz in the local building offices, and of course the criminal element which was concentrated in Berlin
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because it had no Hinterland to overflow into But his conclusion was that the affair would not do Diepgen any good, but he would not be seriously damaged in the long run.

FRG-GDR Relations

15. On the way out by this time, I mentioned the Sindermann visit. Kohl repeated that although he would receive Sindermann in his office neither he nor the Federal President was ever going to make an official visit to East Berlin, and the GDR knew this. I asked whether the President would receive Sindermann and got the answer that this was under consideration.

Comment

16. I will put the main points into a telegram or telegrams together with one or two observations on Kohl's manner today which was definitely less expansive than usual - perhaps because the Greens have charged him with perjury in the Flick affair

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J L Bullard

4 February 1985

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