

Charles. At the P.M.
I haven't seen this, I thought
she (you) might find
of interest. As you know Solary
is quite a liberal democrat.



With the Compliments of

THE AMBASSADOR OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Charles H. Price, II

COP 211

Charles
He (Solary) recently spent two hours
with Kenneth

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British Lion Mustn't Spit Out Nuclear Teeth

By STEPHEN J. SOLARZ

For nearly 40 years the Atlantic alliance has preserved the peace. And for nearly four decades the special relationship linking the U.S. and the United Kingdom has been a mainstay of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Now all this—the unchallenged and unchallengeable bedrock of Europe's postwar stability—is in jeopardy.

At its annual conference last month, the British Labor Party reiterated its commitment to a nuclear-free Britain. A government formed by the Labor Party—now in opposition but given a good chance of winning the next elections—would dismantle Britain's independent nuclear deterrent and require the removal of all U.S. nuclear weapons based in the United Kingdom.

What the British do about their own nuclear weapons is their business. But what they do about U.S. nuclear weapons is of vital concern to the entire alliance.

Were Labor to implement its anti-nuclear policy, it would inevitably generate powerful political pressures in other NATO countries. Belgium and the Netherlands above all, to enact comparable bans. If one or two found it impossible to resist these pressures and adopted non-nuclear policies of their own, even a conservative government in West Germany would find it very difficult to avoid a similar step.

Should our other European allies follow Britain's lead, the alliance would be at a double disadvantage. Not only would NATO continue to confront far superior Warsaw Pact conventional forces, but the U.S. would have to rely on its strategic forces to deter the Soviet Union from using its battlefield nuclear weapons against U.S. troops in the event of war.

Such a deterrent would be neither credible to the Soviet Union nor acceptable to the U.S. Moreover, the American people could hardly be expected to permit U.S. forces to remain in Europe if we were stripped of our capacity to deter and, if necessary, defeat an attack against them. A classic example of good intentions producing bad results, the implementation of Labor's anti-nuclear policy would probably lead to the disintegration of the alliance Labor says it wants to preserve.

Labor Party spokesmen maintain that no matter how unhappy their anti-nuclear policy made the U.S., Washington could not afford to terminate its defense relationship. Yet precisely because Labor's policy could set in motion a chain reaction in other allied countries, the U.S. must make it clear that the benefits of U.S. nuclear protection are inseparable from its burdens. The U.S. could, after all, hardly insist that its other allies accept nuclear weapons if Britain did not.

Even if other European countries decided to follow Labor's nuclear example, the implementation of the Labor program

would still destroy the special relationship that has served both nations so well. Not only would all U.S. nuclear weapons have to be withdrawn from Britain, but U.S. nuclear-armed ships would probably be barred from British waters as well.

Such a prohibition, however, would necessarily result in the exclusion of all U.S. naval vessels from British waters. Since the U.S., in order to complicate Soviet targeting, refuses as a matter of policy to indicate which of its ships carry nuclear weapons, the British would also have to ban conventionally armed U.S. vessels. And it is inconceivable that the U.S. would be willing to maintain a military alliance, let alone a "special relationship," with an island nation to which we could not even send our ships.

Labor's leaders contend that they neither need nor desire the U.S. nuclear umbrella because they don't believe Britain faces a serious nuclear threat. Yet the U.S. can't be expected to continue tying itself to an ally that is vulnerable to nuclear blackmail because it is no longer under the U.S. nuclear umbrella.

Two years ago New Zealand's Labor Party campaigned on a platform of banning all nuclear weapons from New Zealand and its territorial waters. Due to a combination of ineptitude and indifference, the administration failed to make it clear that New Zealand could not continue to enjoy the benefits of the U.S. defense commitment without also sharing its burdens. Labor subsequently won the election and moved to fulfill its promise.

The unhappy outcome—the suspension of the U.S. defense relationship with New Zealand—might have been avoided had the U.S. spoken out more clearly. The Labor government in New Zealand wanted to remain in ANZUS, just as Britain's Labor Party would like the U.K. to stay in NATO. But New Zealand could not have it both ways, and neither could the U.K.

The British are correct in saying that Americans have no right to intervene in British electoral politics. It would, indeed, be totally irresponsible and completely counterproductive for us to express a preference for one party over another or to insert ourselves in a heavy-handed fashion into their domestic debate.

But it would be equally irresponsible were the U.S. to remain silent about the consequences of the Labor policy. Candor is one of the obligations of friendship. Just as the Labor Party has not hesitated to criticize U.S. policy, the U.S. should not refrain from criticizing its policies about Labor's platform. Particularly when stressed by the press, it is entirely appropriate for senior U.S. officials to state plainly the serious consequences of Labor's proposals.

The recent statement along these lines by U.S. Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger—which occasioned great indignation

in the U.K.—is a case in point. It would be a mistake for the British to dismiss his comments as the rantings of a right-wing ideologue. On this issue Mr. Weinberger speaks for most Americans. In much the same way that both Democrats and Republicans in Congress supported President Reagan's decision to suspend the U.S. defense commitment to New Zealand,

both major parties can be expected to react should a future British government require the removal of all U.S. nuclear weapons.

The U.S. undoubtedly bears some responsibility for the evolution of Labor's defense policy. The loose talk about nuclear warning shots and nuclear war winning scenarios that characterized the early years of the Reagan administration undoubtedly added to a feeling that U.S. nuclear weapons constitute more of a peril than a protection for Britain.

Clearly we would be in a better position to deal with British concerns if we followed more prudent policies. If something can be salvaged from the wreckage of Reykjavik—such as an agreement on intermediate-range nuclear forces in Europe—it would help substantially to reduce unilateralistic nuclear pressures.

But regardless of whether the arms-control process moves forward, the British must realize that a true alliance requires sharing the burdens as well as the benefits of a military and political partnership. Roosevelt and Churchill understood this, as did Truman and Attlee, Kennedy and Macmillan, Carter and Callaghan, Reagan and Thatcher. Let us hope that Labor Party leader Neil Kinnock, should he form the next British government, comes to understand it as well.

Mr. Solarz, a Democratic representative from New York, is a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.