

etc (2)



Prime Minister
You will want to see
the Defence Secretary's &
Chancellor's minutes. The
former is rather complacent.

MO 32/4

PRIME MINISTER

I doubt we need
for 10. many
'general' papers.
M.I. They get
nowhere. CDP
20/8.

EUROPE AND DEFENCE

The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary copied to me his minute of 25th July and I have seen your comments in your Private Secretary's letter of 27th July. I agree, of course, with the general objectives in the Foreign Secretary's note: I might comment on some of the specific action in hand in the areas of concern he raises.

2. As to the problem of US concerns over burden sharing, I intend, as Chairman of the Eurogroup, to use the December Ministerial meeting as a vehicle to underline the real and substantial roles Europeans play in Alliance defence. Eurogroup permanent representatives have recently met in Brussels to discuss what more can be done and specific actions are in hand to promote in the US media a better understanding of the European contribution. Exercise LIONHEART should also help in showing the scale of one European country's contribution though it is inevitably proving difficult to attract key US figures to attend the exercise in election year. There is, of course, no easy answer to these US concerns; we just have to plug away both on presentation and on seeking sensible answers to emotive policy issues, such as the argument over infrastructure.

3. On relations within Europe I agree that we must guard against the development of a Bonn/Paris axis. But I do not see this looming - from the perspective of defence Ministers and Ministries at least. We here have close links in terms of collaboration and defence planning with the FRG and good relations with France on both the procurement and defence staff sides. I have deliberately sought myself to build



up a personal relationship with both Dr Woerner and M Hernu. We meet bilaterally at Summits and in the case of Dr Woerner regularly at NATO meetings; because of Italian sensitivities we are no longer meeting trilaterally but there are other opportunities for meetings related to equipment collaboration.

4. Dr Woerner certainly has very good relations with M Hernu and they meet regularly, but this seems to me to be all to the good provided that the Anglo/German relationship is also in good repair. To give one indicator this year Dr Woerner and I have paid a joint visit to British Forces Germany and we intend jointly to visit Exercise LIONHEART in September. I think myself that the Germans are under no illusions about the importance of our contribution to the defence of their country (as well thereby to our own).

5. In equipment terms the scope of our collaborative activities with Germany on defence equipment exceed Franco/German efforts: we are involved with the Germans in Tornado, Field Howitzer 70, the Self Propelled Howitzer SP70, and the European missile programmes AIM 9L and ASRAAM. We also sell more equipment direct to the Germans than do the French. We are involved with both countries in the third generation anti-tank guided weapon (TRIGAT), the Multiple Launch Rocket System and in seeking a 5 nation European Fighter Aircraft. Here too then we must guard against an over dramatic picture.

6. On other possibilities for European collaborative equipment programmes, working through the Eurogroup and the IEPG we have taken the lead in establishing a programme of work against specific deadlines leading to a full review of collaborative possibilities by Ministers (including M Hernu) at a meeting in November. The IEPG under vigorous Dutch chairmanship, and with our assistance, is pursuing other important initiatives - for example, producing a co-ordinated response to the American approach on emerging technology.



7. There is too the forthcoming WEU meeting which will provide yet another means of underlining the political importance attached to increased European collaboration. In none of these fora are the British, so far as I know, in danger of being marginalised.
8. I will report further as specific opportunities unfold.
9. I am copying this minute to the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, the other members of OD and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

Wright

Ministry of Defence
10th August 1984

Foreign Policy Strategy Pt 2.

13 AUG 1984

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