

SCPC
Press

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

4 April, 1984

John Smith,

Visit of Dr Richard von Weizsaecker

The Prime Minister has agreed (my letter of 2 March) to receive Dr Richard von Weizsacker for a tete-a-tete on 5 April before dinner at No 10. I attach a personality report on Dr von Weizsaecker, whose main purpose in visiting Britain this time is to attend the 34th Koenigswinter Conference at Cambridge. He is travelling alone.

Dr von Weizsaecker stepped down as Governing Mayor of Berlin on 9 February. He will stand for the Federal Presidency in succession to President Carstens in May and is certain to be elected. He will assume that office on 1 July.

Dr von Weizsaecker has told our people in Berlin that he detected a somewhat sour atmosphere in Bonn concerning Britain in the immediate aftermath of the Brussels Summit. Against this, German Ministers have made it clear since the European Council that, although they would welcome a solution to the Community's financial problems which reduced the burden on their exchequer, it is an absolute priority for them that Britain should remain a full participant in the Community and work with them in developing a strong Europe.

Dr von Weizsaecker is particularly interested in East/West relations. He has given much thought to the question how, in the long term, the division of Germany might be overcome. As Governing Mayor of Berlin he has recent, practical experience not only of the harsh realities of East/West relations, but also of the advantages that can flow from soundly balanced agreements. As the Prime Minister knows, the division of Germany is also a subject of particular interest to Chancellor Kohl. I am enclosing a short note on this.

Now that he has stepped down from the post of Governing Mayor, von Weizsaecker is unlikely to raise contentious matters affecting Berlin. It is however possible that he may mention a case brought in the High Court by Berliners contesting the construction of a military firing range at Gatow, in the British sector of Berlin. If so, our advice is that the Prime Minister should say that, as the matter is still before the Court, she cannot comment in detail; she could add that the British Military Government in Berlin are determined that everything possible should be

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done to reduce to a minimum any inconvenience that may be caused by the range to the local population.

I will let you have separately some speaking notes for the dinner.

Your m

R B Bone

(R B Bone)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Dowing Street

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VON WEIZSAECKER, DR RICHARD

CDU/CSU candidate for the Federal Presidency.

Born 1920 in Stuttgart, the son of a career diplomat, Ernst von Weizsaecker (who though not a Nazi was State Secretary at the Foreign Office from 1938-43 and was sentenced by a US tribunal in 1949 for complicity in war crimes).

After a period at Oxford in the family of a Balliol don, Richard von Weizsaecker was called up in 1938 and later served with the infantry on the Eastern front. Came within sight of Moscow in 1941. In 1945 he was with the troops cut off in East Prussia and evacuated to Schleswig-Holstein. When the surrender came he demobilised himself and went home.

Studied law at Grenoble and Göttingen and helped to defend his father. Entered industry. President of the German Evangelical Church Conference 1964-70 and 1979-81. Member of the Bundestag from 1969-81. Opposed Scheel in the Presidential election of 1974 and did far better than expected. Author of the CDU's 1978 programme of basic principles. A Vice President of the Bundestag 1979-81. Governing Mayor of Berlin 1981-84. Certain of election as Federal President to succeed Carstens this July.

Imported by the Berlin CDU, somewhat at the last moment, to lead the party into the 1979 Berlin elections, he failed to defeat the SPD/FPD coalition, but achieved a record vote for the CDU. Weizsaecker owed his election as Governing Mayor in June 1981 to support from members of the FDP Parliamentary Party, with which his CDU is now in coalition. Elected Deputy Chairman of the Federal CDU in May 1983.

Weizsaecker is respected for his good sense, upright character and charm. An excellent speaker. An effective Governing Mayor. An intellectual and philosopher with a conversational style to match. Liberal views on both domestic policy and Ostpolitik. An old friend of Britain who has given much time to the Koenigswinter Conferences.

Married with four children. Speaks excellent English. Although born a Freiherr (Baron) he prefers not to use his title.

VISIT OF DR RICHARD VON WEIZSAECKER, 5-8 APRIL 1984

NOTE ON THE GERMAN QUESTION

Reunification

1. The German Question is established as a central theme of Chancellor Kohl's policy. He aims to combat the risk of gradual consolidation of the division of Germany and to avert the danger of a resurgent German national consciousness choosing the path of neutralism to German unity. His strategy is to ensure that legitimate patriotic aspirations find expression in loyalty to NATO and democratic values. This preoccupation is a key factor governing the FRG's relations with the East. Kohl's point of departure is the strong assertion of the basic preconditions of German reunification enshrined in Adenauer's Western-orientated policy on Germany. Kohl also endorses the practical achievements of Brandt and Schmidt's Ospolitik and has thereby ensured broad continuity in foreign policy. The result is a mixture of tactical flexibility (generous credit terms to the GDR, enhanced dialogue and official contacts) and firmness in matters of principle (frequent references to the continuing validity of the concept of 'one Germany' and eventual reunification).

Dr von Weizsaecker's Views

2. Dr von Weizsaecker was closely involved in the formulation of Kohl's policy and is a strong advocate of wider cooperation between East and West. In his view West Germany opted decisively for membership of the Western family of nations in the split that developed after 1945; and that commitment remains. But the political realities dictate the need for accommodation with the East; and formal reunification is not practical politics. His ambition to set his personal mark on inner-German relations led him to hold, in East Berlin in September 1983, the first meeting between a Governing Mayor of Berlin and a GDR Head of State. He did not adequately consult either the Allies or the Federal Government, and we were concerned at the implications for the status of Berlin. This concern was explained to him by the British Ambassador at Bonn.

British and Three Power Position

3. There are no differences of substance with the FRG. Our common objective is a Germany reunited in peace and freedom on the basis of all-German elections. Until that time, there can be no valid Peace Treaty and no final delimitation of German borders. This is the Western commitment as laid down in the Bonn/Paris Conventions which came into force in 1955, and regularly reaffirmed in joint Allied statements. These Conventions were formally re-endorsed on their 25th anniversary in April 1980 in an exchange of letters between the Three Powers and the FRG. We also accept the German view that the Three Powers share a common interest with the FRG in defusing any threat that might arise to the FRG's Western commitment from a possible renaissance of German national sentiment; and to this end, we have agreed in general terms to support the FRG in its efforts to emphasise that the German Question remains open. The Western Allies also give general support to the FRG in its policy of encouraging dialogue and human contact with the GDR.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

4 April 1984

file *SSR*
DINNER FOR DR VON WEIZSAECKER : SPEAKING NOTES

DELIGHTED TO WELCOME.

A TRULY DISTINGUISHED REPRESENTATIVE OF HIS COUNTRY AND A

FRIEND OF OURS.

OUR REGRET THAT HE HAS RECENTLY RELINQUISHED HIS

POST AS GOVERNING MAYOR OF BERLIN, IS COMPENSATED

BY THE THOUGHT THAT WE MAY SEE HIM LENDING

DISTINCTION TO ANOTHER GREAT OFFICE.

TWO YEARS AGO DR VON WEIZSAECKER WAS DUE TO CALL ON ME. THE

DAY CHOSEN WAS 2 APRIL 1982.

FOR REASONS HE WELL UNDERSTOOD - AND YOU ALL WELL

/ UNDERSTAND

UNDERSTAND - THE CALL HAD TO BE CANCELLED.

IN OCTOBER OF THAT YEAR I WENT TO BERLIN AND HAD THE GREAT
PLEASURE OF TALKING TO, AND BEING ENTERTAINED BY,
DR VON WEIZSAECKER. MANY BERLINERS TOLD ME THEN
THAT THE ACTION WE HAD TAKEN IN THE SOUTH ATLANTIC
HAD STRENGTHENED THEIR CONFIDENCE IN THE DETERMINATION
OF THE WEST TO UPHOLD FREEDOM IN EUROPE.
FOR THAT, AND FOR MANY OTHER REASONS, MY VISIT
TO BERLIN WAS UNFORGETTABLE.

/ OUR GUEST

OUR GUEST HAS LONG BEEN A FRIEND OF BRITAIN.

BEFORE THE WAR HE STAYED WITH THE FAMILY OF A

BALLIOL DON.

HE HAS ALWAYS BEEN KEEN TO STRENGTHEN THE

FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN BRITIAN AND GERMANY AND HAS

GIVEN MUCH TIME AND EFFORT TO THE KOENIGSWINTER

CONFERENCE.

HE, LIKE MANY OTHER GUESTS HERE TONIGHT, WILL

BE ATTENDING THIS YEAR'S CONFERENCE IN CAMBRIDGE

TOMORROW.

/ A STRONG

A STRONG RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BERLIN AND GERMANY IS

FUNDAMENTAL TO BRITISH FOREIGN POLICY.

WE ARE ESSENTIAL PARTNERS IN THE DEFENCE OF

EUROPE AND IN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY.

WE SHARE A VISION OF A STRONG WESTERN EUROPE,

CO-OPERATING EFFECTIVELY IN FOREIGN AND DEFENCE

POLICY, AND USING ITS INFLUENCE IN THE WORLD TO

UPHOLD THE MOST PRECIOUS VALUES OF WESTERN

CIVILISATION.

/ WE WISH

WE WISH OUR DISTINGUISHED VISITOR ALL SUCCESS IN THE

FUTURE.



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

4 April 1984

John Johnson

Prime Minister's Dinner for Herr Von Weizsäcker

/ I enclose, as promised, some speaking notes for the Prime Minister's use at the dinner tomorrow evening.

John Bone
R B Bone

(R B Bone)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street



DRAFT SPEAKING NOTE FOR PRIME MINISTER: 5 APRIL 1984

Recall visit to Berlin on 29 October 1982 when I was entertained to dinner by Dr von Weizsaecker (Governing Mayor at the time) in the Charlottenburg Palalce. Valued and admired Dr von Weizsaecker's distinguished work as Governing Mayor. Regret at his departure from that Office compensated by thought that we may see him lending distinction to another great Office (ie Federal Presidency).

Acknoweldge Dr von Weizsaecker's long-standing association with the UK. He stayed with the family of a Balliol don before the war. Oxford associations: Oxford is twinned with Bonn; and I visited Sankt Augustin, which is just outside Bonn, and is twinned with Grantham, in 1983.

Refer to the cancellation of Dr von Weizsaecker's call two years ago as Governing Mayor of Berlin, on the day of the Falklands invasion. The Falklands invasion also coincided with the Koenigswinter Conference at Cambridge two years ago and thinned out attendance by British Ministers and Members of Parliament. No such problem this year. Sir Geoffrey Howe will attend (Mr Pym was prevented two years ago). I recall that I participated myself in the 30th anniversary of Koenigswinter Conference at Cambridge four years ago. Since 1950 Koenigswinter has made an invaluable contribution to Anglo-German relations and to encouraging leading personalities in British public life to be more European-minded. Dr von Weizsaecker's notable contribution to it.

Vision of a stronger Western Europe co-operating effectively in foreign and defence policy, so as to be able to speak with one voice. On that basis we can better conduct a broad dialogue with the Soviet Union and the countries of Eastern Europe. The FRG an essential and valued pillar of such a Europe.

/Our



Our commitment shown by our forces in Germany, and our responsibilities in Berlin. We respect German commitment as the basis on which the FRG can work for improved dialogue and better contacts with Eastern Europe including the GDR. Look forward to settling the problems that face the Community and going forward together to build that new Europe.



Prime Minister.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

Agree to receive new
Governing Mayor of Berlin at
9.30 on Wednesday, 11 July?

16 March 1984

A.S.C. 2/3.

Yes *mk*

John S...

Visit to London of Governing Mayor of Berlin

As you know, Herr von Weizsaecker has stepped down from his position as Governing Mayor of Berlin in anticipation of being elected President of the FRG in May. The Prime Minister is to give him dinner on 5 April. He has been succeeded as Governing Mayor of Berlin by Herr Eberhard Diepgen, who assumed office on 9 February. It is customary for the Governing Mayor to pay early visits to the three Allied capitals and we propose inviting him to London as a guest of HMG from 10 to 12 July.

Sir Geoffrey Howe has invited Herr Diepgen for talks followed by lunch on 11 July. He would like to suggest that the Prime Minister also receive the new Governing Mayor for a courtesy call. This would be in line with what was done for Herr Diepgen's predecessors and would reflect the UK's position as one of the Protecting Powers in Berlin.

I should be grateful to know the Prime Minister's view.

Yes
R B Bone

(R B Bone)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

THE SEVENTH CORBISHLEY MEMORIAL LECTURE

pl. f/w the
convergence on this
subject. A.S.C. 14/3.

STRATEGIES FOR PEACE

by

Professor C F von Weizsäcker

The Wyndham Place Trust
18 Montpelier Row
Blackheath
London SE3 ORL

THE WYNDHAM PLACE TRUST

The Wyndham Place Trust was founded in 1959 to promote among men and women of religious faith a concern for peace, world order and the rule of law. For this purpose it brings together people of various vocations and specializations and those associated with a wide range of political and religious opinions.

As its contribution towards achieving this goal, and a world at peace, the Trust undertakes research and educational activities. It seeks to enlighten public opinion and arouse concern about problems that must be faced in fashioning a world society in an age of interdependence.

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THE SEVENTH CORBISHLEY MEMORIAL LECTURE

STRATEGIES FOR PEACE

by

Professor C F von Weizsäcker

The Wyndham Place Trust
18 Montpelier Row
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THE REVEREND THOMAS CORBISHLEY S J

by Peter Storrs

Father Corbishley had a distinguished career in the Jesuit Order. He was Warden of Campion Hall, Oxford and later Superior at Farm Street, London. He was the first Roman Catholic author to be invited by an Archbishop of Canterbury (Lord Ramsey) to write his Lent Book (*One Body, One Spirit* – 1973). That year also he became the Chairman of the British Committee which organised an International Conference at Roehampton in 1974 on *Christians and the European Community* which was inaugurated by Lord Hailsham and the Archbishop of Canterbury. As a result of this conference an ecumenical group, dedicated to educating Church people as regards the European Community was set up and called *Christians for Europe*. Tom Corbishley was its first chairman.

Thomas Corbishley was an active member of the International Ecumenical Fellowship and of the Wyndham Place Trust which, after his death in March 1976, decided to establish an annual Memorial Lecture.

FOREWORD

by Professor George Wedell

This Seventh Thomas Corbishley Memorial Lecture was given by Professor Dr C F Freiherr von Weizsäcker on Tuesday 5th July 1983 in London. Professor von Weizsäcker is one of the leading theoretical physicists in Germany, having held chairs in this subject in the universities of Strasbourg and Goettingen. He became Professor of Philosophy in Hamburg in 1957. Professor von Weizsäcker has been an opponent of nuclear armament by the Federal Republic. As a Christian philosopher Professor von Weizsäcker in the last twenty-five years has devoted much of his time to the analysis of the social, economic, strategic and religious causes of war and to the exploration of ways of promoting peaceful coexistence. In 1979 he was invited to be a candidate for the Presidency of the German Republic but declined. Until recently he was Director of the Max Planck Institute, Starnberg.

The lecture makes a significant contribution to the search for a viable relationship between East and West. Professor von Weizsäcker's approach is multi-faceted and as such avoids the sterile arguments between unilateral and multilateral disarmament. Professor von Weizsäcker's approach is also mindful of the long term need for a much more creative relationship between the countries of East and West. He applies to this analysis a sober, religious commitment which enables him to combine realism with a lively hope.

The Wyndham Place Trust is very happy to make the lecture available to a wider readership.

STRATEGIES FOR PEACE

"Strategies for Peace" implies that peace is not a good which we possess but an end at which we aim. I accepted this title because I believe indeed that the present peace is threatened because it was never a true peace. This view induces me to sub-divide my speech into three parts:

1. The present danger
2. Peace and ethics
3. Medium-range strategies and short-term tactics.

The first part is a piece of political analysis, trying to say why I consider peace to be actually threatened. The second part is an ethical or theological consideration on the question of what we would mean by true peace. The third part is about possible programmes of action for peace in our time.

I shall begin by reminding you of a few emotional premonitions or perceptions of the underlying crisis of our world.

Before 1914, poets of all great European nations predicted a great war. Fifty years after the event the great scholar, Sir Maurice Bowra of Oxford, collected these voices in an impressive essay on the prediction of the first world war in European literature. The poets were not alone. A few of the leading statesmen of the time sensed with horror the possible tragedy of the drama whose main actors they were. Marxism had a theory, even if an inadequate one, on a final war. And primitive people told each other doomsday prophecies, of which the children's vision of Fatima in 1917 later became the most famous. Yet "they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage.....and knew nothing until the flood came". (St Matthew 24 38-39).

I cannot imagine that this undercurrent of European consciousness should have announced only two great wars which would move the centres of world power from Britain, France and Germany to the United States of America and Russia. It is true that, in the Pax Americana under which we have lived since 1945, progress and optimism have seen a most vigorous revival. But the warning voices were never silenced. Art, probably the most sensitive seismograph of a culture, has obstinately refused to endorse the optimism of these decades. In the centuries since the Renaissance art has presented to us this world as a well-ordered reality; this order was shining through in artistic beauty even in the midst of tragedy. The art of our century is consistently undoing this vision of order. Why? What is the undercurrent sensed by all the great artists of our time?

In the late sixties a wave of protest ran through our planet, from San Francisco to Paris and Prague, even to Peking and Tokyo. In the final event it changed little, but it expressed profound discontent. And since 1980, peace movements in many countries seem to have been awakened into a perception of the real danger.

Emotional perceptions can be more subtle than our intellect but they lack the factual precision needed as a basis for considered action. Hence I shall now turn towards an attempt at rational analysis.

1. THE PRESENT DANGER

It is impossible to give a coherently argued but brief analysis of the present political situation in the world. Hence I shall condense the conclusions to which I have been led into a number of propositions with brief explanations. The propositions are subdivided into four groups:

- I General remarks on history
- II Problems of the world economy
- III The political danger of war
- IV The technical danger of war.

Each group will contain four propositions so there will be sixteen altogether.

I General remarks on history

PROPOSITION 1 – There has always been war in human history. We have not learned to overcome the causes of war.

The fact cannot be denied that there have been wars through at least 6,000 years of history. More than 130 wars have been fought since 1945. There are people who believe that war between the great powers of the Northern Hemisphere is no longer possible due to nuclear deterrence. I shall soon explain why I consider this view erroneous.

First we should turn our attention to the causes of wars. Generally speaking, we may see power conflicts as one of the main reasons for war and mutual fear as one of the main reasons for power conflicts. So I take the power structure as given and try to understand its probable future.

PROPOSITION 2 – Human culture is at present growing rapidly into an unknown and probably unstable future.

Here the key word is "growing". We speak about growth of the economy, of the population, of armaments. Growth seems to be ambivalent. Economic growth is considered good and necessary by economists and politicians, but not by ecologists. Growth of national armaments is deemed necessary by most national governments; its collective effect is called the arms race and is publicly condemned. I suggest that this ambivalence about growth is not specific to our time.

PROPOSITION 3 – Political stability seems to presuppose some degree of economic growth, but in every culture there are specific limits to growth. This may be one of the reasons for the recurrent political instability in all higher cultures.

I make this hypothetical proposition in order to help us to avoid the common fallacy of most political debates, the fallacy of searching for the villain. A structural problem may be accentuated by malevolent or stupid action, but it will not disappear by eliminating such special causes. This remark may describe the difference between an election slogan and a responsible policy.

I ought to give a brief historical argument for the proposition. Economic growth permits government by compromise; stagnation renders harsh decisions indispensable. Even in long-lived cultures like ancient Egypt and classical China, the chroniclers tell us of good emperors and a prosperous dynasty, of bad emperors with harsh measures, barbarian conquest, centuries of trouble, and a new beginning. Were the beloved emperors those who governed by compromise in a growing economy, and were the bad ones the victims of the limits of growth?

PROPOSITION 4 – The present growth and the present danger are beyond historical comparison.

II Problems of the world economy

PROPOSITION 5 – The population growth has so far been peacefully delayed by economic welfare.

Only the rich nations have so far slowed down their growth. In all traditional poor societies it is an advantage for any family to have many children; who, if not the children, will feed the parents when they grow old? Let it be seen whether the present Chinese or Indian rulers will survive politically if they try to limit the growth by force. Thus population growth is a strong, perhaps a cogent, argument for rapid economic growth.

PROPOSITION 6 – It still seems probable that ecological conditions will not permit more than a few decades of further economic growth along traditional lines.

The Club of Rome's detailed arguments were partly erroneous. The first report confounded raw materials as known at the time with those which would be found by further prospecting. But its models, simple as they were, showed that the man-made changes in our natural environment are now approaching the same order of magnitude as natural influences. Hence the natural balance is now at the mercy of human reason. No political mechanism has so far been able to apply reason to these worldwide problems.

PROPOSITION 7 – It is not evident that the present crisis of the world economy can be overcome in the present political structure of the world.

Unemployment – the most striking example – can only be overcome by a redistribution of labour even if the economic growth rates should increase again within plausible limits. This will not be achieved without public action. In my personal view, socialism is less able to promote an economy than is the market. Yet, according to Adam Smith, the market economy needs the State for three purposes: protection of peace, the rule of law and non-profitable enterprises like beacons or roads. In the world market of our own day protection of peace means not just a

national army, but an international peace system. The rule of law must be internationally enforceable, and non-profitable enterprises mean both infrastructure and the protection of the environment.

PROPOSITION 8 – A political world system with enforceable rules and decisions is necessary, while not sufficient, for a functioning world economy.

Today the power to enforce such a system resides only in the United States of America in co-operation with Western Europe and Japan; but it needs a consensus of a relevant majority of the Third World Nations and coexistence with the Soviet bloc. Let us pray for reason!

III The political danger of war

PROPOSITION 9 – The likelihood of conflict in the Third World is prone to increase rather than decrease.

Most of these conflicts have genuine local reasons. The end of political colonialism left the liberated nations with a power gap in which new systems of domination were bound to arise. The unsolved problems of the world economy produce both abject poverty in rural districts and urban slums and, on the other hand, a new class of those who are sufficiently fed and educated to recruit new technocrats and also an élite of ardent revolutionaries.

PROPOSITION 10 – The two super-powers are objectively entrenched in a competition for hegemony.

I say "objectively" to indicate that it is not in the free personal decision of the leaders of either power to disengage their respective nation from this contest. Conflicts for hegemony are as old as the different organised political units within a culture. In general, both sides in such a conflict see their own role subjectively and honestly as defensive. The other side is always the aggressor.

Since the early sixties I have expected and then observed a world-political cycle. The cold war, a system of antagonistic bipolarity, led to a mutual political paralysis of the two super-powers in an increasingly pluralistic world structure. Hence the super-powers found a common interest in some degree of co-operative bipolarity, which is called *détente*. Yet they were bound to rediscover that they were still hegemonial competitors. This is the present phase, probably more dangerous for peace than was the cold war in the time of American military superiority.

PROPOSITION 11 – The Soviet empire is today a threat to the world due to its combination of military strength, political immobility and economic, demographic and ideological weakness.

Russia has a long tradition of steady and cautious power politics, filling

every power gap near its borders and preparing for defence against great powers. Defence against Mongol, Polish, Swedish, French or German armies of conquest is the Russian experience of history. Marxism added the idea of world revolution, entailing an expected aggression of Capitalism against the Socialist leader. Today the Soviet Union is second to none in the military field, but weak in all other aspects. Thus it lives in fear and it excites fear in the very world whose encirclement it fears.

PROPOSITION 12 – *The present American reaction to the Soviet threat is positively increasing the danger.*

A perilous aspect of American foreign policy is its large pendulum swings. The Soviet regime has no reason whatsoever for embarking on a big war as long as it can safely survive without it. But it is absurd to believe that it would ever fall down “not with a bang but a whimper”. A policy which would try to achieve this is dangerous even if it is only rhetorical. The tiger in the circus constantly retreats from the slow moves of the trainer, but if cornered, the tiger will jump and kill the trainer.

The hegemonial confrontation might have led to a Third World War long since, had it not been prevented by the justified fear of nuclear warfare.

IV The technical danger

PROPOSITION 13 – *Peace cannot be perpetually stabilized by technology: it needs a political stabilization.*

Let me give the following two illustrations:

PROPOSITION 14 – *We cannot completely rule out an outbreak of war by technological failure.*

Throughout the past thirty-five years I have considered this a minor danger. Technology is what our civilisation has learned to master; our shortcomings are in the political and moral fields. But with the increasingly short warning times, and with the idea of “launch on warning” – an idea as natural as it is horrible – the danger cannot be excluded. And one failure could lead to catastrophe.

PROPOSITION 15 – *Small nuclear weapons for special uses are constantly being developed. It is quite probable that some day they will be used.*

The rationale for these weapons was to make deterrence credible at every level. But the temptation actually to use them rests precisely in the fact that escalation is not automatic. In the Third World nuclear weapons might well be used, either by a third power or by one of the super-powers, without ensuing escalation and with military success. But breaking the nuclear taboo once is extremely

dangerous even if successful. And even the European theatre is not safe from such temptations. The debate between true believers in the safety of deterrence and prophets of the absolute holocaust is dangerously superficial, for it distracts attention from the more probable limited but still unprecedented horror in the intermediate range.

I conclude:

PROPOSITION 16 – *A nuclear world war is actually possible, even probable, in the remaining years of this century.*

2. PEACE AND ETHICS

The picture which I have painted in an attempt at rational analysis is dark and dramatic, yet it is less dramatic than my true feelings. What is required from a human being in the light of this situation? I think we need the courage to despair, and the strength not to despair.

Twenty-five years ago a friend asked me: “Do you believe that the possible war of which you speak will actually happen?”. Without hesitation I said: “I don’t know”. After a second I continued “I am not permitted to know”. Indeed if either I knew that the war would happen or else if I knew that it would not happen, I would do nothing: but it is my duty to do something. Later on my feelings became even less optimistic. He who has not felt the total despair in his heart is unable to help; he will escape into the cowardice of unreal optimistic solutions. But he who stays within the field of despair can do nothing. Yet the strength not to despair is a gift of grace.

I return to an analysis of the possible ethical answers to the challenge of the nuclear age. I do this in two steps. First I shall seek the answer in the field of secular political ethics. Then I shall ask what Christian faith means in this situation.

The field of secular political ethics has been opened mainly by the Age of Reason. In my German tradition, nobody has reflected on this field more profoundly than Immanuel Kant in his *Critique of Practical Reason* and his ensuing but little known writings on the philosophy of history, culminating in his wonderful essay, *Perpetual Peace*. Let me share with you some of the ideas I hope to have learned from Kant.

Kant says that the civilized state has been achieved within our nations, but that between the nations the natural state still prevails. The civilized state means the rule of law. Kant distinguishes between legality and morality. I think this well-known distinction is one of the greatest *moral* achievements of modern times. In Kant’s words, legality means to act in accordance with the law, morality means to act out of respect for the law. In the civilized state we are permitted, and the courts of law are even requested, to judge the legality of the action of our fellow citizens.

But we are not permitted to judge the morality of our neighbour. The moral question I must address to myself, or only as a friend, to a friend. The rule of law preserves civic freedom. Freedom is not what I crave for my own wilful actions, but what I grant my fellow citizen. Freedom is a precondition for the public search for truth, and truth is needed if a civilized community is to survive. This is, in outline, the theory of the liberal state.

Kant continues that there will be no end to the sufferings and tragedies of history unless the civilized state, the rule of law, is also established between nations. I take this postulate into the present situation, two hundred years after Kant. At the beginning I said that our peace is threatened, since it was never a true peace. A minimal condition for a peace to deserve the name of true peace would mean a rule of enforceable law. I said this in connection with the world economy; and I add that I do not see what a political preservation of peace can mean unless it contains the rule of law.

The political realist will ask how such a rule of law can possibly be established in the world as we know it. I would not use the word "despair" if I were not myself open to this doubt. But at present I act as the advocate of modern rationalism and I say that it is rational to expect the universal rule of law to be finally established. Imagine a man six hundred years ago saying (in 1383) that the time will come when the City of London would no longer need protection by city walls. The political realist would then have replied; "You fool! Not before the Second Coming". Yet in 1383 the two decisive secular inventions had already been made: artillery that finally rendered city walls useless and the territorial state that made them unnecessary. The weapons that may soon render national defence useless have already been invented. How could a worldwide rule of law stay unenforceable indefinitely?

The pessimistic answer is that the territorial state was only established when many city walls had actually been broken in civil wars. Correspondingly by far the most probable way towards an efficient political union of the world would be the Third World War with all its consequences. One of these might be a worldwide dictatorship rather than a rule of law in a free society of nations. We approach here a profound weakness of secular rationalism.

Kant's idea of the civilized state rests on his categorical imperative which is no more nor less than a profound philosophical interpretation of the Golden Rule. The maxim of your action ought always to be apt as the principle of a universal legislation. Universality is a basic concept in the field of reason. The categorical imperative is, in other words, the self-imposed practical principle of reason: you should act in a manner that makes the common life of rational beings possible. I have no objection whatsoever against this rule. In my personal view, there is no political problem in the world that would not, in principle, admit of a rational solution if both sides sincerely wish to apply reason even to their own behaviour. But how will they be induced to do so? The blindness of our affections will only be overcome by a stronger affection. This affection is called love in Christian language. The prevalence of emotional motivation is the reason for which I chose in this lecture twice to

preface my analytical attempts by appealing to your emotional perception. I did so by frankly presenting my own emotions.

Let me do it a third time when I speak of Christian ethics. When I was a boy of eleven I read St. Matthew's Gospel. I read the Sermon on the Mount. I was struck by terror. What I read was evidently and incontrovertibly true. But if it were true, my personal life was false and so was the life of our whole world, including the life of my beloved and revered parents. Not much later, at the age of sixteen, I lost for ever my naïve childhood faith — in the acceptance of the authority of tradition. I lost it by the simple consideration that other cultures implant other kinds of faith in their children. Being brought up as a Lutheran, as a Christian, in a religious tradition, proves nothing whatsoever about the truth of these beliefs. Yet up to this day I have never been able to deny the evident truth of the Sermon on the Mount. It strikes me in my heart. And still, as almost all Christians, I am not living according to its commandments. This is, in a nutshell, the problem of two thousand years of the Christian Church; it is the moral problem of human history.

In the meantime I have learned what scholarship can tell us about the Sermon on the Mount. It must be read in conjunction with the parables and with the announcement of the Last Judgement. This is precisely what struck me as a child. The world must be completely transformed if it is to live under the commandment of love. This change can begin here and now in every single person; the kingdom of heaven is already with us. As a moral law, the commandments cannot but produce terror. Who is able to obey them? But the essence is in the Beatitudes. This, as theologians say, is not law but gospel. It is an experience that can actually be made. But it is, to my mind, absolutely certain that Jesus did not intend merely to transform our minds leaving political history as it is. He believed in the Judgement, probably an impending one. The mythical, cosmic imagery of the revelation is not to deceive us; a real event in human history is meant. It means to establish the true sense of Creation. But, as God's actions often are, this extreme bliss is preceded by destructive terror. Who can see God and live?

History evolved quite differently from that which the early Christians expected. The Second Coming was delayed beyond every expectation. But the unredeemed world turned to Christian faith. Christians found themselves, amazingly enough, in responsible positions in the unredeemed world; they inherited the empire whose destruction had been their original hope. There were always two possible reactions to this fact. The official church accepted it, it became imperial and responsible. Minority groups persisted in rejecting participation. Both groups had characteristic answers to the Sermon on the Mount. The official church re-interpreted it so as to show that the commandments were not meant to be literally obeyed in this present age. The minorities, like the Franciscan friars or the Quakers, renouncing any personal possession of power, had no difficulty in believing that Jesus' words were meant to be obeyed.

I should like to interject here a remark on human nature. Man is the animal that possesses a history. Human action, as distinct from instinctive behaviour, can

interpret the chain leading from stimulus to response. Language, judgement and tradition endow us with a non-genetic inheritance of acquiring properties. One may say that human culture rests on a luxury of modes of behaviour, a luxury of means and of ends. One of man's most efficient and most dangerous luxuries is power. I define power as the unlimited accumulation of means for personal or social ends. Wealth is power, as analysed by Marx. Knowledge is power as Francis Bacon said. Armament is power and this is our present problem. Power competition tends to produce self-contradictory situations. For every single competitor it is absolutely rational to acquire more power; given the competition this is his precondition of survival. But for the society in which all competitors have to live together, precisely this competition can turn out to be fatal. Every competitor sees himself on the defensive; so did Athens and Sparta, so do the United States and the Soviet Union. Adam Smith's three tasks of the state, and especially the rule of law, are meant to mitigate this competition by reason. Our problem is: why is reason so weak?

The ethics of the Sermon on the Mount have their forerunners in the Hebrew Prophets, but no less in the ascetic schools of India, most wonderfully expressed for example in the sermons of Buddha. I should call this great tradition a counter-luxury against the luxury of power, a luxurious effusion of good will, of self-denying love. These two luxuries have lived together in history for millenia. But the eschatological hope that the kingdom of flourishing power should finally be overcome has always stayed a rational hope. In the old times of undeveloped technology, the self-destructiveness of power competition was limited mainly by its inadequate means of destruction. There was a Darwinian self-preservation for some of those who did not mix with the battle of the elephants. In our time the contradiction in the power competition comes to a climax: who will be spared?

This climax has now become clearly felt throughout mankind. How can this feeling be transformed into action? There is the danger that it induces in us resignation and passive despair. The Christian tradition, however, offers other ways.

One way is radical pacifism. This is a genuinely Christian attitude. Even quietism, as practised by minority groups all through Christian history, is a kind of action. Those who dissociated themselves from any participation of power and left history to the mercy of God presented a symbol of peace to the world. And who would deny that even a tacit example, with the intensity of prayer, changes something in the world? And by perceiving the suffering of their neighbours and giving active help, they can be drawn into ever broader fields of action. Look at the achievements of the Society of Friends! Today pacifism has become a possible political principle. This leads us to the problem of practical strategies for peace.

Perhaps even more impressive is what is happening today in mainstream Churches. I want to express my theological admiration for the American Catholic Bishops. They have taken the doctrine of the just war seriously. This doctrine was developed by the official church in the Middle Ages, not by the dissenting minorities. It meant to mitigate the power competition in this age and to give a lead towards Christian behaviour in the unredeemed world. Wars will continue to be fought until the Last Events. A Christian in a politically responsible position can find it

inescapable to fight in a war, even to wage a war. But two conditions must be fulfilled. The war must be fought for a just cause and with adequate means for the cause.

The American Bishops have clearly understood that a nuclear war cannot possibly be a just war. And they have understood, too, that deterrence, by threatening a nuclear war, is equally inadmissible from a moral point of view if the threat is meant to be carried out, and is of little avail if it is not meant to be carried out. These two facts stand out clearly and, I think, undeniably.

Yet it is hard to draw the casuistic conclusions from them. Can we get rid of nuclear weapons and retain the rest? My subjective impression is that "war as usual" will have no chance in the long run. I feel that we must overcome the institution of war, or face World War. Yet I shall not try here to prove such far-reaching statements.

I must now speak about the details of peace strategies, not for a distant future, but for the coming ten years.

3. MEDIUM-RANGE STRATEGIES AND SHORT-TERM TACTICS

What is a strategy for peace? The foundation of the League of Nations, 1919, and of the United Nations in 1945, was part of a political peace strategy. So was détente and so are the large peace movements of our days. The question is which strategy to embark on, considering chances and dangers. Some of the possible strategies are mutually exclusive while others are consistent with each other. I shall discuss four possible strategies:

- I Quest for superiority
- II Balance of power
- III Opening the frontiers
- IV Unilateral disarmament.

I Quest for superiority – This may look surprising in a list of peace strategies. But history gives us examples of imperial peace, of at least a temporary end to the competition for power by the victory of one power. An empire is, inevitably, morally ambivalent, but cultures have seen prosperous centuries under imperial rule. Such was the Pax Romana under which, among other things, the rapid spread of Christianity became possible.

I dare to mention another much debated example: India was given nearly two centuries of unity and progress in many fields under the British Raj. Who would not prefer a World Empire to a nuclear war? Yet in history, established empires were probably always preceded by hegemonial wars. Today both the United States and the Soviet Union think that the world would be safe under its own hegemony. I cannot exclude that America, had she used her military and economic superiority after 1945 for a consistently imperialistic policy, might have achieved a lasting world hegemony but, I fear, not without an early and victorious war against Russia. But this is an unrealistic fantasy. Of all hegemonial nations in

history, America was probably the most reluctant imperialist. The ideals of the American revolution, the lack of equal competitors on their own continent and the preoccupation with economic development, preserved an aversion against consistent imperialism. Today Russia has acquired approximate military parity. An American quest for military superiority, even hidden behind a rhetoric of restoring the military balance, is a profoundly perilous kind of brinkmanship. I had to mention the quest for superiority in order to say with rational arguments why I cannot believe in it as a possible peace strategy today.

II Balance of power — This is the diplomatic formula for the present negotiations in arms control. As such it is necessary, but I am afraid that it is no more than that. Historically, balance of power has never been a good way of preserving peace between competitors for supremacy. The famous European balance of five powers was preserved through centuries, but with wars recurrent in nearly every generation. Balance of forces is a permanent temptation to test the forces. Yet arms control is imperative in our times, and it cannot be achieved otherwise than under the diplomatic formula of balance, with the silly but necessary device of counting missiles, warheads, payloads, aircraft, submarines and tanks.

Let me say a word on disarmament. I have always been deeply sceptical about the attempts at achieving disarmament. History offers almost no example of disarmament unless it was imposed by a victor or applied to obsolete weapons. This is not surprising. The natural form of the competition for power, motivated by mutual fear in an honestly defensive mood on both sides, is an unlimited arms race. Arms control was a great idea for two decades. It intended to stop the arms race by the existence of invulnerable second strike capabilities. This has been achieved for strategic intercontinental missiles. But quite naturally the race went on with smaller weapons where assured destruction is not the question and where, hence, superiority counts.

Arms control is indispensable today. A full additional lecture could be given on its details; at present I confine myself to a few remarks. Success in the Geneva and Vienna talks is necessary. It is vital for the future of Europe to put an agreed limit to all intermediate range missiles for which the arms race is raging today. It is desirable to reduce inter-continental missiles. It would be great progress to replace the destabilising multiple warhead missiles (MIRV) by missiles with one warhead. All this is a medium-range peace strategy. We will be lucky if we can avoid a destabilising new arms race, and we will be lucky also if our present statesmen avoid a nuclear war during the next ten years.

It would be more than a medium-range strategy if it were possible in the long run to replace all nuclear weapons by new more refined conventional armaments. But we should not forget that this in itself is not yet a strategy for peace, but for damage limitation. In the European theatre it would be a great step forward if we could concentrate on such conventional weapons which can be used for defence only, so-called defensive defence, like infantry-borne precision-guided anti-tank missiles. They would not give rise to a new, conventional arms race because they would not threaten the other side's territory. But all these limitations would have to be no more than measures to accompany a political initiative for peace.

III Opening the frontiers — This is the most important concrete peace strategy. I am not now speaking of the Third World problems. I discussed them, as far as was possible, in the first part of this lecture. Between the two blocs of the North, economic ties and a free exchange of persons and of their views are the elements of a political peace strategy. Yet we should not be deceived about the dangers waiting on this path. They can be seen in two directions.

The present American administration seems to consider close economic ties with the Eastern bloc mainly as a strengthening of its military potential and hence as an unwelcome side-effect of European business interests. I think both we Europeans and our American friends ought to oppose this cowardly view. We are definitely not interested in strengthening the Soviet military build-up, and certain articles might well stay excluded from the trade list. But the main purpose of economic ties is precisely to open the frontiers and to create a common interest in the preservation of peace. This, as historical examples teach us, is not a sufficient means for preventing war, but it is useful.

The main danger lies in the opposite direction. The Soviet rulers see a threat to their system in an opening of the frontiers. The preservation of an absolutist rule by closing frontiers is a Tsarist heritage (and was common in oriental despotisms). It is intensified by the survival interest of the new communist ruling class. They are clear sighted enough to know that their system would not stand the competition of a free market both of ideas and of material goods. This was, I think, the main reason for the limited success of the détente policy. But if this is so, it is not for us to renounce the policy of open frontiers. We will have to continue it consistently and unaggressively. In a profoundly dangerous world situation we should not threaten Soviet rule by trying to promote dissent in their empire. Provide their people with more open access to the free world and let them take care of their future themselves. We may frankly express our view on their system as I have done, and we do not need to hide our admiration for heroes of peace and justice like Sakharov. But this does not exclude a diplomatic and trade policy of good relations.

IV Unilateral disarmament — This is a much discussed topic. There are fields in which this can easily be done without detriment to strategic stability, for example in short-range battlefield nuclear weapons. When unilateralism is proposed as a matter of principle, it provokes in me an ambivalent reaction. Those who would go all the way towards a complete renunciation of protection by weapons, accepting the possible loss of political freedom, may be the ones to remind us that the commandments of the Sermon on the Mount were meant to be done. If a whole nation, knowing the possible consequences, were to go this way by democratic consensus, it might be spared some of the horrors even of a possible war and it would set a great example. I would personally be prepared to join such a decision if a true majority could be found for it. But this is not a political reality today. And those who advocate pacifism must act carefully. They should not forget that the immediate practical consequence of their action might further destabilise the present precarious truce which is called peace. It is to be expected that their step would be perceived by the Soviet leadership as a definite sign of Western decay and

thus as a proof that their intransigent policy was correct and will have to be continued. If however, we do not dare to go the full way to pacifism, unilateral arms limitation remains a meaningful diplomatic instrument, to be applied without fear in a number of cases, but not as a full peace strategy.

So much for medium-range strategies. Let me finish by a few remarks on short-term tactics for peace.

Short-term tactics for peace. I limit myself again to the field of arms control. Possible immediate measures have been proposed, like a nuclear freeze or a pledge not to use nuclear weapons first. In both cases, the correct official Western answer was that in the present situation such a step would favour the Soviet side. But this fact only shows that the West has moved itself into a situation which will not be morally and diplomatically tenable in the long run. Three years ago I publicly proposed to the Churches to urge a no-first-use pledge for merely moral reasons; with the purpose of inducing the policy-planners to invent a less dangerous, conventional strategy. This is still my view.

The more urgent question is presented by the negotiations on medium-range missiles (INF). The strength of the Soviet position lies in the fact that they fill a gap in the treaties and negotiations which was left open between SALT I and MBRF, Vienna, by introducing a large new potential threat against Europe and both China and Japan by their SS-20 missiles. At present both sides are playing poker in Geneva taking intransigent and mutually irreconcilable positions. The main question is how to take account of the existing and the future British and French missiles. My personal view, which I pronounced in public in 1979 before the NATO dual-track decision, is that missiles which can reach Soviet territory, placed on the soil of a densely populated country like my own, are a threat to our country more than to the Soviets. I proposed a base at sea if they are considered necessary. Since NATO insisted on land-based missiles, the Soviets have now the great poker advantage of using the absolutely natural and rational public opposition to these missiles on our soil as an ally of Soviet intransigence. It is hard not to blame the Western leaders for having failed to foresee this impasse. I can only tell the Soviets that even now it is most dangerous for them to over-bid their cards. They must be interested in not joining Western public opinion to American intransigence. A negotiated solution is necessary, whatever its contents, if a most dangerous aggravation of the arms race is to be avoided.

I hope you will forgive me for examining these matters of detail. There is no sensible strategy that would not need to be implemented in concrete tactics. Let us pray for peace, let us think about peace, let us act on peace.

INF — Intermediate Nuclear Force
SALT I — Strategic Arms Limitation Talks
MBRF — Mutual Balanced Force Reduction

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May 5th, 1983

Prime Minister

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M.

Prime Minister,

having returned to Berlin after a two-day visit to the Luther celebrations in the GDR I want to thank you once again for the warm welcome last week in No. 10 Downing Street. It was a great honour and a great pleasure to meet you again.

In my view it was important to continue the talks which we began in October last year during your moving visit to Berlin. I was again deeply impressed by your knowledge and interest concerning the situation in eastern Europe and particularly in East Germany.

Your continued deep commitment to Berlin is extremely important to our city and its people.

I am looking forward to seeing you again

Yours sincerely

Richard Weizsäcker

The Prime Minister
Margaret Thatcher



Germany

Visit of Governors of W Berlin
March 4