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ROCARD'S SPEECH AT CHATHAM HOUSE, 8 FEBRUARY: POL-MIL.

1. ROCARD ARGUED THAT, DESPITE DIFFERENCES OF NUCLEAR DOCTRINE AND POLICY, BOTH BRITAIN AND FRANCE HAD A STRONG SENSE OF NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE AND BOTH DISPOSED OF INDEPENDENT NATIONAL NUCLEAR FORCES. HE SAID THAT THE INF DEBATE HAD BROUGHT THE TWO COUNTRIES CLOSER, WITH A NEW SENSE OF SOLIDARITY. ANGLO-FRENCH STRATEGIC RELATIONS HAD CONSEQUENTLY PROGRESSED OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS. NOW HOWEVER THERE SEEMED TO BE A CERTAIN STAGNATION WHICH CAUSED DISAPPOINTMENT AND IMPATIENCE. BUT GIVEN THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CHALLENGES WE FACED, AND THE VALUES WE SHARED, FRANCO-BRITISH RELATIONS SHOULD BE ONE OF THE CLOSEST LINKS OF EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY.
2. BRITAIN AND FRANCE SHOULD CO-OPERATE ON ARMS CONTROL, PLACING IT WITHIN A WIDER EAST/WEST POLITICAL CONTEXT. WE SHOULD CO-OPERATE TO AVOID DENUCLEARISATION. WE NEEDED MORE INTENSIVE JOINT REFLEXION ON NUCLEAR ARMS CONTROL SO AS TO SPEAK WITH A COMMON VOICE. OTHERWISE WE WOULD EITHER HAVE TO FALL BACK ON POLICIES OF NOSTALGIA (UNDERSTAND DOGMATIC GAULLISM FOR FRANCE) OR ACCEPT CHOICES IN WHICH WE DO NOT BELIEVE.
3. ROCARD CALLED FOR MORE DEFENCE EQUIPMENT COLLABORATION TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF BUDGETARY AND INDUSTRIAL CONSTRAINTS. HE MENTIONED THE IEPG'S ROLE AND PRAISED THE ANGLO-FRENCH DEFENCE PROCUREMENT INITIATIVE, WHICH HE HOPED COULD BE DEVELOPED.
4. ROCARD SUGGESTED THAT FRANCO-BRITISH SECURITY CO-OPERATION COULD BE TAKEN FURTHER AND HAVE POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE FOR EUROPE GENERALLY IF WE COULD AGREE:

(A) THAT ALL COUNTRIES ARE INVOLVED IN EUROPE'S SECURITY: BILATERAL RELATIONS SUCH AS THE FRANCO-GERMAN RELATIONS CANNOT ALONE ASSURE EUROPE'S FUTURE.

(B) THAT SECURITY AND DISARMAMENT REQUIREMENTS MUST BE COMBINED: HERE THE BRITISH COMPROMISE PROPOSAL FOR THE CONVENTIONAL ARMS NEGOTIATIONS WAS EXEMPLARY.

(C) EUROPE'S SECURITY REQUIRES BOTH CONVENTIONAL AND NUCLEAR FORCES: FRANCE AND BRITAIN AS INDEPENDENT NUCLEAR POWERS HAD A SPECIAL ROLE AND INCREASED RESPONSIBILITIES POST-INF.

5. ROCARD ARGUED THAT THE QUESTION TODAY WAS NOT ABOUT OUR DIFFERENT RELATIONSHIPS WITH NATO BUT HOW TO EXPRESS ALLIANCE SOLIDARITY. WE NEEDED CASE-BY-CASE PRAGMATIC CO-OPERATION. THE WEU WAS OF PARTICULAR INTEREST, WHICH WAS WHY HE HAD PROPOSED A WEU INSTITUTE OF SECURITY STUDIES, TO EDUCATE PUBLIC OPINION AND A EUROPEAN TRANSPARENCY CENTRE TO REDUCE THE SECRECY OF MILITARY DATA, CONCEPTS AND PROGRAMMES. THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT WAS ACTIVELY CONSIDERING HOW WE COULD GO FORWARD TOGETHER.

COMMENT

6. ROCARD'S ENTHUSIASM FOR ANGLO-FRENCH DEFENCE CO-OPERATION, AIMED AT STRENGTHENING THE COLLECTIVE SECURITY, IS NOT NEW, BUT THIS IS THE FIRST TIME HE HAS SPOKEN OUT WITH SUCH CONVICTION ON THE SUBJECT. HE BELIEVES THAT ANGLO-FRENCH CO-OPERATION IS ESSENTIAL IF WE ARE TO MEET THE SECURITY CHALLENGES WHICH FACE EUROPE IN THE POST-INF PERIOD. HE HAS FRAMED HIS ARGUMENT IN A WAY WHICH HE HOPES WILL BE PERSUASIVE TO US: THE TONE IS PRAGMATIC AND FORWARD-LOOKING, WITH NO ATTEMPT TO SCORE POINTS OR FIGHT OLD BATTLES. POINTS OF INTEREST ARE:

(A) HIS EXPLICIT AND REPEATED REFERENCES TO THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE BRITISH NUCLEAR DETERRENT. THIS DELIBERATELY SETS THE RECORD STRAIGHT AFTER MITTERRAND'S QUESTIONING OF ITS INDEPENDENCE IN A SPEECH LAST AUTUMN. (THE ELYSEE WILL HAVE APPROVED ROCARD'S SPEECH.)

(B) HIS EMPHASIS ON THE RISKS OF EUROPEAN DENUCLEARISATION, AND THE FEAR AT WHICH HE HINTS THAT IF WE DO NOT WORK TOGETHER TO RESIST IT FRANCE MAY FALL BACK INTO THE OLD GAULLIST NATIONAL SANCTUARY APPROACH.

(C) HIS RECOGNITION THAT BILATERAL DEFENCE RELATIONSHIPS, EG THE FRANCO-GERMAN ONE, HAVE ONLY A LIMITED ROLE IN ASSURING THE COLLECTIVE DEFENCE. (AN IMPLICIT ACCEPTANCE OF THE POINT WHICH THE PRIME MINISTER MADE TO MITTERRAND LAST JANUARY.)

(D) HIS INTEREST IN THE WEU FOR PROMOTING DEFENCE CO-OPERATION IN

A PRAGMATIC AND CASE-BY-CASE.

7. ROCARD'S ARGUMENTS ARE GENERAL AND DO NOT SET A SPECIFIC AGENDA. BUT THE CONSTRUCTIVE TONE IS WELCOME, AND I SEE EVERY ADVANTAGE IN OUR LOOKING FOR WAYS OF BUILDING ON THE DIALOGUE ENVISAGED IN ROCARD'S APPROACH. SIR M QUINLAN, WHO HAS TALKED IN THE LAST TWO DAYS TO SENIOR FRENCH OFFICIALS IN THE ELYSEE, QUAI, PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE AND FRENCH MOD, HAS DONE SO. AT THE SAME TIME HE HAS CORRECTED ROCARD'S MISUNDERSTANDING OF OUR QUOTE SUB-STRATEGIC OPTIONS UNQUOTE (ROCARD ADDED TO ONE OF HIS REFERENCES TO THE INDEPENDENCE OF BRITISH STRATEGIC FORCES THE COMMENT THAT BRITAIN FEELS IT MAY BE NECESSARY QUOTE FROM NOW ON UNQUOTE TO HAVE SUB-STRATEGIC OPTIONS.) THE ANGLO-FRENCH SUMMIT WILL PROVIDE A FURTHER OPPORTUNITY.

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