

SECRET

TCM/E90/353
9/1

19 Mar 90

PS/Secretary of State

Copy to:

PSO/CDS
PS/VCDS
PS/DUS(P)
FCO - Mr Weston
No 10 - Mr Powell
Cabinet Office - Ms Phippard

OFFICE CALL BY M VEDRINE, ELYSEE SPOKESMAN AND ADVISER

M Vedrine called on PUS on Friday 16 March. Discussion centred on the implications of German reunification for Alliance security.

2. PUS asked M Vedrine for his assessment of how a unified German state would behave towards the Allies and what steps we should be taking to influence German behaviour. M Vedrine said that he did not think we had much time in which to influence German opinion. He feared that a unified Germany might very quickly wish to see the removal of all stationed forces from its soil. The recent difficulties over low-flying training were evidence of German popular impatience with stationed forces. The outcome of the elections in the FRG would not affect this trend in German sentiment. He feared that the Germans in this mood would be susceptible to Russian pressure to agree to the removal of stationed forces and nuclear weapons. He thought it possible that the Germans might apply for some special status within the Alliance (like the French), but this was something which the Allies should resist.

3. PUS acknowledged that there was a real risk that the Germans would be inclined to accept the removal of all nuclear weapons from their territory. He hoped however that the Germans would not be driven so far and would be sufficiently prudent not to concede Soviet demands for the removal of all stationed forces or to accept a continuing Soviet presence on German soil as a quid pro quo - they should point out to the Russians the difference between a voluntary agreement between NATO Allies on the stationing of forces and the imposition of foreign troops.

1 of 3

SECRET

SECRET

4. PUS commented that it was important to be clear about what was desirable and achievable. For example, it might be necessary to reduce the size of our stationed forces, but still retain substantial numbers. This would serve both national and Alliance interests. M Vedrine replied that the basis on which French forces were stationed in Germany had changed over the years from forces of occupation to forces for the defence of Western Europe. The Franco-German Brigade marked a new departure, being a force that was based on bi-lateral agreement. It might be possible to explore the expansion of this formation into a much larger force, which could include British forces as well as French and German. Such a development might help to persuade the Germans to accept the continued presence of stationed forces.

5. PUS said that the Allies should do all they could to make stationed forces more palatable to the Germans. The idea of multi-national forces was worth exploring. It might be possible to reduce German feelings of singularisation by introducing reciprocal measures on stationed forces - eg by inviting German pilots to do low flying training in France. M Vedrine accepted this proposition in principle but he said that he could see practical difficulties. For example, French memories of German occupation in the last World War would have to be taken into account.

6. Turning to nuclear matters M Vedrine raised the question of German attitudes towards the possession of nuclear weapons. PUS replied that the Germans would have to reaffirm their non-nuclear status, whether by reaffirmation of their obligations under the Brussels Treaty or the NPT. This would have to be achieved by consent, not forced on Germany. M Vedrine agreed.

7. PUS said that the continued stationing of Allied nuclear forces in Germany seemed much more likely to be problematic. At least it would be important for the Allies to seek to retain air-delivered non-strategic nuclear weapons in Germany. M Vedrine agreed.

C

SECRET

8. PUS said the Allies might consider whether there was any way of making the stationing of nuclear forces more acceptable to the Germans. Nuclear weapons would have to remain under national control but there might be scope for permitting German DCA to deploy to other NATO countries from time to time, in this way helping to diminish feelings of singularisation. M Vedrine agreed with PUS that any such idea would need careful research.

9. There followed a brief discussion along familiar lines about Anglo French nuclear cooperation, in particular the successor to ASMP, and differences in British and French nuclear strategy. Nothing new emerged from this. Both PUS and M Vedrine concluded by agreeing on the need to consult closely on ways in which to minimise German feelings of singularisation in order to achieve our objectives on stationed forces and nuclear weapons.

T C McKane

T C MCKANE

PS/PUS

MB6137 2839MB