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cc Mantel  
Defense: May 79: Nuclear Release  
Procedures  
China: Sino-British Rel.  
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NOTE OF A MEETING HELD IN THE OVAL OFFICE, WHITE HOUSE, WASHINGTON, DC,  
MONDAY, 17 DECEMBER, 1979, 1230 PM

Present:

The President of the United States  
The Secretary of State  
Dr. Brzezinski  
The Prime Minister  
The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary  
Sir Robert Armstrong

Middle East

In the course of a restricted meeting held after the plenary session of the Prime Minister's talks with the President, the President said to the Prime Minister that the United States Administration would like to expand its discussions with the UK Government on the need for an increased presence in the area of the Persian Gulf and on increased use of Diego Garcia. In the Gulf, they would welcome the support that the UK could give, with the benefit of its long links in that area, and they would like to consult the British on possibilities for providing bases for a US presence.

Secretary Vance added, on Diego Garcia, that the British Ambassador had stressed the importance, from the British point of view, of avoiding public references to the use of Diego Garcia; instructions had been given accordingly.

China

The President said that the Secretary for Defense would be going to China in the New Year to discuss matters of common strategic and political interest. It was not the intention

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to sell weapons to the Chinese.

The Prime Minister said that the British were prepared to sell Harriers to the Chinese if they wished to buy them. She added that the British Government had now withdrawn recognition of the Pol Pot regime in Cambodia; this decision had upset the Chinese, and the ASEAN countries. The President commented wryly that the Americans were a little upset too. He said that the American Government wished that it were possible to get Prince Sihanouk back into Cambodia; but the Chinese were clinging to Pol Pot. The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary said that, when Chairman Hua visited the United Kingdom, he had given the impression that Chinese enthusiasm for Pol Pot was diminishing.

The President asked the Prime Minister what impression she had formed of Chairman Hua. The Prime Minister said that, as when she first met him, he had seemed very much in command. He had been very relaxed, though his entourage seemed to speak less easily in front of him on this occasion than when she had first met him. He had talked readily and at length, but when she had pressed him for an answer on a specific matter - such as Hong Kong - he had not come up with clear answers. The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary added that Chairman Hua had not struck him as being of the same quality as Deng Hsiao-Ping: neither as incisive nor as decisive. Dr. Brzezinski commented that Chairman Hua was much more in the Imperial tradition: gentler and more general and wide-ranging than Deng Hsiao-Ping. The Prime Minister had commented that he had seemed to adapt very easily to the ways of the various countries which he had visited; but she did not think that he necessarily carried that difference of attitude back with him when he returned to China. It could well be that, like many people from non-western cultures, Chairman Hua was able to switch without difficulty between a Chinese and a western culture, without carrying his attitudes across.

The meeting adjourned at about 1250 p.m.

19 December, 1979.

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