

PRIME MINISTER

Saturday Evening Dinner : Discussion of Arms Control

President Reagan has confirmed that he would be grateful if you would introduce this discussion.

In the last few days there have been conflicting messages about whether or not the Americans want the Summit to issue a public statement on INF. We have now had a clear statement of their views. They have dropped the idea of negotiating a statement in advance of the Summit. But if, following the discussion at the Saturday dinner, there is agreement that there should be a short political statement emphasising the Alliance's seriousness about the negotiations and seriousness about deployment if these fail, the Americans will welcome this. They hope that we shall support the idea but they will not press it if other heads of government are unenthusiastic (there have been some indications that Mitterrand and perhaps even Kohl have doubts).

I attach some speaking notes which may be useful to you in introducing the discussion. I also attach a background brief.

A.J.C.

26 May 1983

BACKGROUND

Procedure

11. Discussion of arms control by Heads of State and Government will take place over dinner on Saturday 28 May. The Prime Minister has offered to open this discussion and President Reagan has welcomed this. Foreign Ministers are due to continue discussion on arms control the following morning. The Americans initially favoured a statement, by Heads of State and Government on arms control, particularly INF. [They have evidently dropped this idea, after it became clear that the French (and to some extent the Germans) were reluctant. Their current proposal is that Foreign Ministers could, in briefings after the Summit, say that Heads of State and government had discussed INF issues and that there had been wide agreement on all aspects.]

They still favour it if other agree. 27/5.

INF

12. As the Alliance moves towards the first Pershing 2 and cruise missile deployments by the end of this year, there is obviously some danger that continued lack of visible progress in the various existing arms control fora will undermine confidence in the multilateral arms control process itself. There are two dangers here: first, a renewal of impetus for the CND cause (though in the UK this looks containable); second, a temptation particularly among the less stalwart allies, to put the US under pressure to make further negotiating concessions for agreement at almost any cost. This could have adverse repercussions in Washington for intra-Alliance relations more generally.

13. The message for the Europeans at this juncture must therefore be the need for steadiness of nerve. Equally, we have a

right to expect from the US Administration a better awareness of how words and actions in Washington can inadvertently damage Alliance objectives by their political effect in Europe when there has been inadequate forethought or consultation.

Positions on INF

14. a. Canada. The Canadian Government has taken a firm line in combatting criticism of their proposed agreement to provision of facilities in Canada for testing of US cruise missiles. In supporting NATO's negotiating position the Canadians have stressed the need for the Americans to be seen to be making a serious effort to achieve results in Geneva (and Mr Trudeau has publicly criticised President Reagan for his rhetorical approach to East/West relations). There are some straws in the wind (nothing that could be quoted) that Mr Trudeau may be a potential waiverer on the exclusion of British and French systems from INF.

b. Japan. The Japanese firmly support NATO's negotiating position. Their particular interest is that NATO should not give way to Soviet pressure for agreement enforcing purely regional (ie. European) limitations. The Japanese want global limitations on SS20 (see para.16 b below), which is the existing NATO position.

c. Italy. The Italians remain firm in their intention to deploy cruise missiles in Sicily. INF continues to be a relatively unimportant issue in domestic politics, and is not a major election issue. No predictable outcome to the election is likely to alter substantially present policy.

British Systems

15. INF negotiations resumed in Geneva on 17 May. There is no likelihood of a breakthrough during this round. Mr Andropov's speech on 3 May indicated a Soviet willingness to give due importance to warheads as a counting unit in negotiations. But the underlying Soviet position has not changed. This is to offer reduction of Soviet missiles in Europe to a number which equals those of the British and French nuclear forces combined. The Alliance position of course is that British and French forces can have no place in the INF negotiations. But some of the smaller Allies may renege on this position (eg. Denmark and Norway and this may be a point for Mr Trudeau). Even the Americans and the Germans are beginning to say that the position with regard to British and French forces in INF will be strengthened to the extent that we can show we do not have a closed mind about the longer term relationship of the British deterrent to strategic arms control. It is not of course a question of being prepared even hypothetically to countenance that there should ever by any reduction in the British strategic deterrent, which is already of minimum viable size. But if ever the Soviet and American nuclear arsenals were reduced by very large numbers, it is arguable that we might at some subsequent stage in strategic arms control see less need to oppose either the counting of British systems in the overall equation or, perhaps preferably, the notion of a freeze on the level of British nuclear forces so long as the Soviet Union accepted appropriate corresponding restraints. The slight adjustment in HMG's public formulation on the subject (text attached), which Mr Pym had proposed and which the Prime Minister had earlier accepted should be deployed in the anticipated defence/disarmament debate

in the House earlier this month, would have eased the position both with Allies and domestically. (But Mr Heseltine had expressed reservations). There is no doubt that the Americans would welcome such a statement. Putting off the issue to the Greek Kalends by an uncommitted reference to reviewing the position in relation to longer term strategic arms control may also of course make it much harder for the Russians to stick by their existing INF position which is the main obstacle to agreement. The Prime Minister may feel that this is not the right occasion on which to encourage speculation about future contingencies (particularly since there is obviously a risk of a leak which could be damaging). Her colleagues may however come forward with their own ideas on this issue and, in this case, the Prime Minister may feel it advisable to listen to what they say without comment while emphasising the overriding importance of NATO's determination to keep British systems out of the INF talks.

Other INF Issues

16. In addition to the problem of French and British systems, there are a number of other major issues in the INF negotiations which remain in dispute. These are:

- a. The nature of the existing balance of forces. The Russians continue to insist that there is an existing balance of medium range nuclear systems in Europe which would be disturbed by any new NATO deployments. But they have juggled the facts in order to concoct this claim. It does not stand up to serious scrutiny, and we are doing our best to bring this home in detail to informed opinion and the media in the UK.

b. The Russians continue to try to limit the scope of the INF negotiations to a geographical zone defined as Europe and surrounding waters. The NATO position has always been for a global approach seeking limitations and reductions on the relevant systems wherever deployed. This question has assumed added significance now that Japan has become alert to the possibility that any Soviet missiles reduced in Europe and not actually destroyed might be available for redeployment to Soviet Asia, thus constituting an increased threat to Japan. We have told the Japanese that the global approach remains as much in the Western security interest as in theirs, because we would derive no comfort from the simple removal of Soviet mobile systems to the other side of a line drawn artificially on the map whence they could just as easily return. There is a strong political interest in not allowing the Japanese to think that NATO would buy an INF arms control agreement with the Russians at their expense. But there have been a few hints that the Germans may be wobbly on this point.

c. The question of the inclusion of aircraft among INF systems to be reduced. The Russians would like to include aircraft. NATO has so far said that aircraft should not be covered in a first INF agreement but could come at a later stage. It is possible that in due course the Alliance position on this question may have to evolve. But, if so, it adds strength to the argument for global limitations, since aircraft are the most mobile of all nuclear capable systems. And the Soviet Union would have to accept proper counting rules (which it has not done so far) to include its own aircraft of ranges which correspond to those on the US side.

d. Verification. A great deal more work will be necessary on the issue in due course if any agreement is to be made watertight. Linked to it is the need for so-called 'collateral constraints' to prevent the Russians from under-cutting the INF agreement on longer range missiles by resorting to increased deployments or deployments closer to NATO territory of shorter range INF missiles such as SS12/22 and SS23.

START

17. The START discussions redume at Geneva on 8 June. No imminent progress is likely. The Russians may need to amplify their negotiating position - that there be a ceiling of 1800 launchers and heavy bombers - to take account of Andropov's reference on 3 May to including warheads as a counting unit in INF. Some adjustment in the US negotiating position will probably also be necessary following President Reagan's acceptance of the Scowcroft Commission report on US strategic forces. Scowcroft has recommended that, in addition to the deployment of 100 MX ICBMs, the US should think seriously about developing a new single warhead light mobile land-based ICBM, with the longer term aim of encouraging both sides to get away from MIRVed systems. This will require some increase in the existing launcher limit in the US negotiating position on START. Other major elements in the US approach to START, such as how to deal with aggregate throw-weight, the phasing of US negotiating requirements and the anomalous position of sea launched cruise missiles, remain very contentious as between the various agencies concerend in Washington. It is not clear what will emerge from the current debate in Washington. The

himself has been closely involved and we know a range of options are under consideration (eg. limitations on warheads only without limitations on launcher numbers, or limitations solely on aggregate warhead numbers and aggregate throw-weight).

18. It may therefore be appropriate to urge the Americans not to bite off more than can be chewed at one go, and to concentrate on a negotiating approach which has some prospect of success in the near term. Overloading the menu of requirements will only fuel the argument of those in Europe who claim that President Reagan's approach to arms control is purely cosmetic. One possibility worth exploring might be whether the Administration see any chance of going for an outline framework agreement (by analogy with the Vladivostok agreement of 1974 which preceded the SALT 2), of which the more detailed elements could be filled by negotiators in slower time. This might incense definitions of overall numerical limits, with systems to be included and units of account. The most likely catalyst for such an approach would be the prospect of a US/Soviet Summit, but this is obviously a very uncertain quantity.

Other Arms Control

19. a. A Conference on Disarmament in Europe (CDE). There is a prospect of an agreement within the next few weeks in the CSCE Review Conference at Madrid. Part of the outcome would be agreement to hold a CDE, probably starting in Stockholm within the next 12 months, to negotiate confidence and security building measures applicable to the whole of Europe up to the Urals. The Americans have been holding out for progress on the human rights front as part of the necessary overall compromise in Madrid. The value

of a CDE from the Western point of view would be that for the first time the Russians would have accepted inclusion of all Soviet territory up to the Urals in a regime of notification of military movements and, above all, of verification.

b. Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction in Vienna (MBFR). These negotiations now in their 10th year also show no sign of imminent breakthrough. But the US Administration has been reviewing its position at the highest level. They intend to hold a meeting early in June with the Germans and ourselves at Soviet official level to explore the ground for possible new approaches.

c. Chemical weapons. We are anxious to get things going at the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva to negotiate a comprehensive ban on the stockpiling and production of chemical weapons. The UK has made recent new proposals on verification. This is an area which may repay a serious effort, and we should urge the Americans to be as positive as possible in their approach.

d. Outer Space. The US Administration has not made up its mind definitively about arms control in outer space but is developing anti-satellite weapons to match the existing Soviet capability and, looking further ahead, is initiating a new research effort into space based anti-ballistic missile systems. The Russians profess to want a total ban on space weapons but are meanwhile developing their own capabilities. Some Europeans (France and Italy) want to press ahead with a ban on anti-satellite systems immediately.

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FCO and Ministry of Defence are considering whether further arms control in space is desirable and feasible. Proposals to be put to the Americans may emerge from these exchanges. Meanwhile our interest is to persuade them to keep options open and to hold them to their agreement to set up a working group on space with a limited mandate in the Geneva Committee on Disarmament this summer.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

26 May 1983

BRITISH SYSTEMS

Proposed modification to UK public line:-

" ... If the circumstances were to change significantly, for example if Soviet military capabilities and the threat they pose to the UK were to be reduced substantially in particular as a result of agreed major reductions in American and Soviet strategic systems to equal ceilings, we would of course be prepared to review our position in relation to arms control."

[New wording underlined]

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(TELEGRAM NO. 1496 OF 27 MAY FROM WASHINGTON TO FCO)

CONTROL OVER US NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN THE UK

1. President Reagan yesterday gave an interview to journalists from the six countries other than the US participating in the Williamsburg Summit. During the interview, John Suchet of ITN raised the dual key control issue. Full text of the exchange follows:

Begins:

Suchet: Mr. President, a major issue in the British General Election is the basing of American Cruise missiles in Britain. Mrs. Thatcher has said in Parliament that she has received an explanation from you as to who will be in control of firing these missiles, but you as yet have said nothing publicly. Will you tell the British people now who is ultimately in control of firing these missiles, you or Mrs. Thatcher?

President: Let me say that we will I do not think either one of us will do anything independent of the other. This constitutes a sort of veto power, doesn't it? But we have an understanding about this and would never act unilaterally with any of our allies on this.

Suchet: I think the British people are very concerned about the basing of these missiles in their own country. Perhaps they deserve to be all the more so since you seem reluctant to say that the power to fire them does not rest with you.

President: They can rest assured. But my reluctance to say anything is based on the fact that we get dangerously into the area of telling others not friendly to us what our policies might be: and I do not think we should do that.

Ends.

(Wright)