



10 DOWNING STREET

Prime Minister

The attached letter from
Michael Heseltine
(to Sir Michael Havers)
is self-explanatory. |

However, I thought I should
add one point relating to the
£100,000 figure mentioned
by Michael Heseltine on
Page 2. The Chairman of the
Party has agreed that in the event
of Michael Heseltine having to
pay damages and costs, the
Party should bear the brunt.

Steven *Harley*
MT

Stephen

27th July 1983

PERSONAL



DEFENCE 8/27/74
1. Mr. Sherbourne - to see
2. Prime Minister

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

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MO 17

27th July 1983

See 111

LIBEL ACTION BY MR ROGER SPILLER

As you may have seen in the Press, I am being sued for libel by Mr Roger Spiller, a Vice-Chairman of CND. I thought you should know where matters stand.

/ The action arises from a letter (text attached) I sent in April, through Conservative Party Central Office, to all Conservative MPs and Candidates in marginal seats. This followed public statements by CND that they intended to oppose Conservative candidates in these seats. The statements in the letter about the political affiliations of CND Council Members were not new - they had first been made by Ray Whitney over the Easter weekend as part of our effort to counteract CND's own propaganda then.

/ Mr Spiller alleges libel on the grounds that my letter suggested he was insincere in his desire for peace and instead interested in advancing the cause of the Soviet Union and of Communism, and that I had alleged he was associated with the International Socialists and thereby damaged his position as a Divisional Officer of ASTMS. The former claim is more difficult to deal with than the link with the International Socialists on which there is a good deal of material. I attach a copy of the draft defence which has been prepared by Carter-Ruck and partners and which has to be submitted at the beginning of August.

The Rt Hon Sir Michael Havers QC MP

PERSONAL

PERSONAL



I understand that it could be 18 months to 2 years before a case came to court and it remains to be seen whether Mr Spiller will continue to pursue his claim. With the number of witnesses involved a court case could last 5 - 6 weeks. Public interest would be large and I believe that there would be general support for the position I took. I am advised that there is a very good chance of a successful outcome but that in a case like this the outcome cannot be certain. On the worst result, the damages and costs involved could be substantial (in the order of £100,000). We shall therefore have very much in mind the possibility of reaching a satisfactory solution out of court.

Although the letter was sent, and the case is being handled, as a Conservative Party matter, if it comes to court it will be seen as also involving my responsibilities as the Secretary of State for Defence. You may wish to consider whether there are any issues which arise from this standpoint.

Copies go to the Prime Minister, Geoffrey Howe, Cecil Parkinson and Sir Robert Armstrong.

Yours ever

Michael Heseltine

LETTER FROM THE RT HON MICHAEL HESELTINE, MP, SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR DEFENCE TO CONSERVATIVE MPs AND CANDIDATES IN MARGINAL SEATS

At the next election you will be fighting a marginal constituency on behalf of the Conservative Party.

I thought I would therefore write to you about the official policy of CND to oppose you during the campaign.

I think you should welcome this because the announcement has revealed the true nature and purpose of CND. By their own act they have clearly revealed what up to now has always been for some a matter of doubt. They are an organisation led and dominated by left wing activists ranging through the Labour Party to the Communist Party.

Some people in your constituency will be surprised at so overt a decision by CND. Everyone is concerned about the dangers and horrors of war. So great is the destructive power of nuclear weapons that many people in all parties have found themselves attracted by generalised phrases about peace as though these offered a coherent set of policy proposals. "The peace movement" must by definition be an almost irresistible concept taken at its face value. Now the mask has dropped. CND has decided to take on the Conservative Party.

Many people attracted to the peace movement will just not want to believe that behind the carefully tuned phrases about peace lies the calculating political professionalism of full time socialists and communists. Many people will feel betrayed and insulted by so overt a party political decision by CND. They will be deeply disappointed because they know that for most of the post-war period in which Britain

has been a nuclear power and a member of NATO there have been Conservative Governments in power. And throughout that time we have had peace in Europe.

I wish to make no narrow party point because all Governments - Labour and Conservative - since the war have backed the three vital ingredients of our defence policy:

1. Membership of NATO
2. Conventional strength backed by nuclear deterrence
3. A British independent deterrent

These policies have worked. We have lived in peace under Conservative and Labour Governments for the longest period in modern European history.

The Labour Party now intends to change their policy. But during their period in power they supported the same policies as us and thus maintained the peace.

And so to suggest a monopoly of concern for peace for the Labour Party at the expense of the Conservative is to disregard the irrefutable evidence of forty years. It is to insult the intelligence of the British people.

There has therefore to be a purpose for so preposterous a claim which is nothing to do with peace at all.

And there is.

That purpose is the advance of the socialist and communist cause. At its most extreme it is to argue the cause of the Soviet Union at the expense of the free societies of the West.

You will not be surprised by all this because you know something of the personalities, techniques and objectives of CND.

You will know for example that when the Prime Minister and I were attacked over Easter for pointing the moral of the Berlin Wall the loudest CND denunciation came from a former candidate of the Communist Party Michael Pentz. Of course the TV cameras didn't explain his political affiliations. They only showed a man marching for peace and attacking the Conservatives. Once you know of his political background you understand his sensitivity about the Berlin Wall.

CND is now planning to attend the Soviet Union front organisation, the World Peace Council in Prague this summer. Peace their way means that we disarm, while they don't. CND say they are going as limited observers. That has the realism of the hovering vultures telling the corpse they aren't hungry.

But many of your constituents will not know about the conspiracy of the left that is now the driving force distorting the language of peace.

Our Colleague Ray Witney the MP for Wycombe added a valuable

contribution to our knowledge on the political motivations of CND very recently. I enclose an extract from his statement. A clear majority of the total members of the National Council of CND (including officers) are of the left or extreme left.

And as we know when the left takes control in its modern manifestation it is adept at the conspiracy of control.

Three people who failed to get elected to the CND National Council in 1982 have now been appointed regional delegates. They are all communists.

Within the last few days Stanley Bonnett, Editor of the CND newspaper "Sanity", has been ousted. The Secretary of the new editorial board that has taken over is a communist Paul Nicholls. Mr Bonnett is in a very special position to know what life is really all about behind the gentle mask of the peace movement.

All over this country we must now recognise that we face hard-line left professionals deeply entrenched in the Labour Party and the front organisations surrounding it. They use the arguments for peace for party political purposes.

It is important that the public is aware of this as the defence issues are rightly debated.

At local government level hundreds of thousands of pounds of rate-payers' money are now being frittered away by Labour councillors play acting at peace keeping, in partnership with CND. The Bradford

pamphlet attached shows the kind of thing they get up to. Actually they weaken our defence. If the Kremlin ever believed for a moment that they represented the will of the British people and her allies to defend their freedom it would bring the risks of aggressive Soviet tactics much closer.

We don't just talk about peace. In government we maintain it.

We have done so through our support for NATO, our belief that we must back our conventional forces with nuclear capability and our determination that Britain should maintain an independent nuclear deterrent.

CND is against all these policies.

Against NATO.

Against backing our conventional forces with nuclear capability.

Against an independent British deterrent.

And now it is going to challenge the Conservative Party in the marginal constituencies.

I don't find it surprising that communists and socialists should do that. But we must ensure that the British people do not vote against this country's ability to defend itself without knowing about the real motives and purpose of the peace movement.

They march in the name of peace. Ask them where their journey ends.