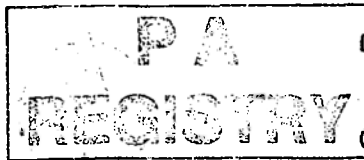


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EMBARGOED SUMMARY - CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY EXPECTED ABOUT 1.45 P.M.
LONDON TIME MONDAY 21ST OCTOBER 1985

LORD CARRINGTON: DEFENCE IS THE MOST BASIC SOCIAL SERVICE OF THEM ALL

LONDON - North Atlantic Treaty Organisation Secretary General Lord Carrington said Monday that those who regarded defence as distasteful were acting as if it "were competing with the social services, rather than constituting the most basic one of them all."

He told a British Atlantic Committee fund-raising lunch that "democratic politicians tend to regard defence rather like old-fashioned medicine - something that is no doubt good for you, and occasionally essential, but that leaves an unpleasant taste in the mouth and is best kept locked away in the cupboard."

This was partly why NATO needed help in getting across the message that there was a continuing need for an alliance that had kept the peace for 35 years. Another part was that "there are a lot of people who are preaching the opposite - some because they are deliberately seeking to tilt the balance of power in their favour, and some because they are genuine - though, in my view, misguided - idealists."

Lord Carrington said: "We may think it absurd when we drive through a London borough to see signs proclaiming it a nuclear-free zone. But it would be just as absurd to put up a sign outside the entrance to this room proclaiming it an 'illusion-free zone,' and then to leave it at that."

NATO itself had budgetary constraints in conveying the message as did individual governments, but lack of money was not a very sensible explanation "when you consider how much is being spent on the military effort and how little on explaining the political need for it," said Lord Carrington.

He also asserted that there was an urgent need in some major NATO countries to re-establish a degree of bipartisanship on key defence and East-West relations matters.

Lord Carrington said it was "neither serious nor scrupulously honest for those who are opposed to nuclear weapons to present their case as if they were the only people around in favour of peace - or as if those who disagreed with them were against it." He said that CND leader Monsignor Bruce Kent, for example, "keeps telling me that it is not the policy of what he calls any of the major Western European peace movements to give the Soviet Union a monopoly of nuclear weapons. But I still don't understand precisely what nuclear weapons he and his colleagues believe that the West should keep, and who should keep them, and where, and under what conditions."

There were others who did not mind leaving the West open to Soviet nuclear blackmail - "like the American pacifist who visited us at NATO a few months ago and said that people were not all that badly off in Poland and that she'd rather that than keep nuclear weapons."

The alliance's most senior official asserted that "it is not open to the Western democracies to ban the bomb.... The hard truth of the matter is that we in the West can abdicate the responsibilities of nuclear power, but that we cannot thereby ensure either a world free of nuclear weapons, or a world in which those weapons will never be used."

Of the latest Soviet arms control proposals, Lord Carrington asked if the Soviet leaders "really believe that the Americans should be concerned only about systems that can strike the United States and ignore what is targeted against their allies in Western Europe - and, indeed, against their troops in Europe?" If the Soviet negotiators "were to stick to this arithmetic of the absurd, then that would cast serious doubt on the intentions of the new Soviet leadership."

Lord Carrington said Soviet leader Gorbachev had to decide whether to work with Western governments to establish and build upon common ground - or whether to work against them, hoping their successors would settle for something favourable to the Soviet Union.

He would have a chance to make his intentions clear at his summit meeting with President Reagan in Geneva next month, said Lord Carrington.

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The full text of Lord Carrington's speech follows:

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RESUME SOUS EMBARGO - VERIFIER LA CONFORMITE DU TEXTE PAR RAPPORT
AU DISCOURS PRONONCE A LONDRES LE LUNDI 21 OCTOBRE 1985
VERS 13H45 (HEURE LOCALE)

LORD CARRINGTON: LA DEFENSE EST LE PLUS ESSENTIEL DE TOUS LES SERVICES SOCIAUX

LONDRES - Lord Carrington, Secrétaire général de l'Organisation du Traité de l'Atlantique Nord, a déclaré lundi que considérer la défense comme une préoccupation déplacée revient à dire qu'elle "fait concurrence aux services sociaux, alors qu'elle constitue le plus essentiel de tous". Lors d'un déjeuner avec collecte de fonds organisé par le Comité atlantique britannique, il a indiqué que "les hommes politiques qui se réclament de la démocratie tendent à considérer la défense comme une sorte de remède désuet - comme une chose qui ne peut faire que du bien, et qui peut même parfois être indispensable, mais qui laisse dans la bouche un goût déplaisant, et qu'il vaut mieux garder enfermée dans l'armoire".

C'est une des raisons pour lesquelles l'OTAN a besoin qu'on l'aide à faire comprendre qu'une alliance qui maintient la paix depuis 35 ans garde toute sa nécessité. Une autre raison est que "beaucoup de gens prêchent le contraire - soit parce qu'ils cherchent délibérément à faire pencher l'équilibre de la puissance en leur faveur, soit parce que ce sont des idéalistes sincères - mais, à mon sens, fourvoyés."

Lord Carrington a dit encore : "Nous pouvons trouver absurdes ces affiches qui proclament que tel quartier de Londres est une zone exempte d'armes nucléaires. Mais il serait tout aussi absurde de mettre à l'entrée de cette salle une pancarte la déclarant "zone exempte d'illusions", et d'en rester là".

Comme les gouvernements, l'OTAN est soumise à des contraintes budgétaires quand il s'agit de faire passer le message, mais le manque d'argent n'est pas une raison très valable "si on considère tout ce qui est dépensé pour l'effort militaire et le peu que l'on consacre à l'explication de sa nécessité politique", a précisé Lord Carrington.

Il a affirmé en outre que, dans certains grands pays de l'OTAN, il est urgent de rétablir un certain degré de bipartisme sur les questions clés touchant la défense et les relations Est-Ouest.

Lord Carrington a dit ensuite qu'il n'était "ni sérieux ni scrupuleusement honnête de la part des opposants aux armes nucléaires de présenter leur cause comme s'ils étaient les seuls à vouloir la paix - ou comme si ceux qui ne partageaient pas leur point de vue étaient ennemis de la paix." Il a ajouté : "par exemple, Mgr Bruce Kent, dirigeant de la CDN, me répète que la politique de ce qu'il appelle tous les grands mouvements pacifistes d'Europe occidentale n'est pas de donner à l'Union soviétique le monopole des armes nucléaires. Mais je ne comprends toujours pas très bien quelles armes nucléaires ses collègues et lui-même estiment que l'Ouest devrait conserver, ni qui devrait les conserver, ni où, ni dans quelles conditions."

D'autres ne voient pas d'inconvénient à laisser l'Ouest exposé au chantage nucléaire soviétique - "comme la pacifiste américaine qui est venue nous voir à l'OTAN il y a quelques mois et a déclaré que les Polonais n'étaient pas du tout aussi malheureux qu'on le disait et qu'elle préférerait cette situation au maintien d'un arsenal nucléaire."

Le plus haut responsable de l'Alliance a poursuivi en ces termes : "les démocraties occidentales n'ont pas la faculté d'interdire la bombe ... La dure vérité est que nous, les Occidentaux, pouvons renoncer aux responsabilités de la puissance nucléaire, mais pas assurer de cette façon l'existence d'un monde sans armes nucléaires, ni d'un monde où de telles armes ne seront jamais utilisées."

Evoquant les dernières propositions soviétiques en matière de maîtrise des armements, Lord Carrington a demandé si les dirigeants de l'URSS "pensent réellement que les Américains ne devraient se préoccuper que des systèmes qui peuvent frapper les Etats-Unis, sans tenir compte des armes pointées sur leurs alliés en Europe occidentale - et, en fait, sur leurs forces stationnées en Europe". Si les négociateurs soviétiques "devaient s'en tenir à cette arithmétique de l'absurde, on pourrait mettre sérieusement en doute les intentions des nouveaux dirigeants de l'URSS".

Lord Carrington a indiqué que M. Gorbatchev devait décider s'il veut travailler avec les gouvernements occidentaux, pour dégager et développer des terrains d'entente, ou contre ces gouvernements, dans l'espoir que leurs successeurs adopteront des options favorables à l'Union soviétique.

Il aura l'occasion de faire connaître clairement ses intentions à la réunion au sommet avec le président Reagan qui aura lieu à Genève le mois prochain, a observé Lord Carrington.

RESUME SOUS EMBARGO - VERIFIER LA CONFORMITE DU TEXTE PAR RAPPORT
AU DISCOURS PRONONCE A LONDRES LE LUNDI 21 OCTOBRE 1985
VERS 13H45 (HEURE LOCALE)

Le texte complet du discours de Lord Carrington suit :

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THE BRITISH ATLANTIC COMMITTEE LUNCHEON,

THE GROCERS' HALL, LONDON

MONDAY, 21ST OCTOBER, 1985

REMARKS BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE

NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ASSOCIATION,

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE LORD CARRINGTON

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

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EMBARGOED UNTIL 21ST OCTOBER, 1985 AT 13.45 HOURS LONDON TIME

BRITISH ATLANTIC COMMITTEE

Let me start by saying that, if we were in the United States, this would be billed as a fund-raising occasion. Here, of course, we are much too diffident to say so. Things like that, we think comfortingly to ourselves, go without saying. And more often than not, they do go without saying; and the result is a certain confusion.

The plan on this occasion is to avoid confusion. I have been told that I need not bang on about what the British Atlantic Committee is and does, because part of that was covered in John Killick's letter of invitation; and the rest is spelled out on the back of your menu, and in some briefing material which will be available outside, and which I hope that you will take with you when you leave.

What I have been asked to do is to emphasise my strong support for what the British Atlantic Committee is doing. And that I do very sincerely - albeit a little shamelessly - because what it is doing is supporting NATO and making my job easier. And then I am to suggest to you, so delicately that not a ripple appears on the surface of the water, what you ought to be doing: which is to put one hand deep into your pockets, and reach out with the other to grasp a rich friend.

It might be a little unseemly were you all to respond immediately to both these requests. John Killick has been kind enough to say that he and the Committee will be happy to give you an hour or two to get back to your offices.

But why do we need help in getting across what I, and perhaps everyone in this room, would regard as no more than common sense? In short, the fact that parliamentary democracies that want to go on being parliamentary democracies cannot afford to take dangerous short cuts on defence; that neither can they afford to go it alone; and that there is, therefore, a continuing need for the Alliance which has kept the peace over the last 35 years.

The answer to that part of the question is simple: it's because there are a lot of people who are preaching the opposite. Some because they are deliberately seeking to tilt the balance of power in their favour; and some because they are genuine, though in my view misguided, idealists. Soviet propagandists play their part when they put forward disarmament proposals which are neither equitably balanced nor verifiable. And members of the self-styled peace movements do so when they seek to persuade us - and our children and grandchildren in particular - that theirs is the only valid conclusion from the undoubtedly valid premise that a nuclear war would be immensely destructive.

The matter is by no means as simple as that rather facile argument would suggest. No-one denies that nuclear war would be immeasurably destructive. But a conventional war, fought with modern weapons on the Continent of Europe, would be no picnic either. And the job of governments, and of the Alliance, is to prevent both. Which we have so far done very successfully - with a policy which has the advantage of having been tried, and found not wanting, over a good many years.

But it is not enough that governments - or we in this room - should know the answer. We may think it absurd when we drive through a London Borough to see signs proclaiming it a nuclear-free zone. But it would be just as absurd to put up a sign outside the entrance to this room, proclaiming it an "illusion-free zone", and then to leave it at that. Street corners, classrooms, lecture halls - and above all television screens - matter. And it matters also that the debate should not be abandoned to those who, for good motives or for bad, are preaching a message which I believe would make war more rather than less likely.

You may agree with me so far - I hope you do - and yet feel that there are questions about information and information policy still to be answered. Like why doesn't NATO get on with it then? Or why don't governments?

There are two answers to why NATO doesn't do more. The first is that member nations take the view that information is their responsibility. The second is that the level of the NATO information budget has been set accordingly.

There is, of course, good sense in the view that national politicians tend to know best how to put a point across to their own electorates. And to say that NATO is an alliance of sixteen sovereign states is on occasion no more than a statesmanlike way of saying that the place is full of foreigners. Not many of whom we might want to see marching up and down the green and pleasant land at some sensitive moment in the political debate about defence or security policy. And other allies feel much the same way.

But, understandable though these sentiments may be, they are not the whole of the picture. There are some aspects of the information business which can be done more effectively if they are done centrally. Like building up a library of well-researched and well-presented material which can be drawn upon as customers think appropriate; providing speakers who can address issues from an alliance rather than a specifically national point of view; and encouraging visits to NATO Headquarters. And this, I am afraid, is where our budgetary constraints come into play; and leave us unable to do a great deal which would without question be useful.

It is, of course, the Treasuries we have to persuade, and I won't multiply examples now. But meanwhile, if NATO as such can't do more, why don't member governments? Here again, finance is part of the answer - though not I think a very sensible one, when you consider how much is being spent on the military effort and how little on explaining the political need for it. But it isn't only a question of money.

Part of the problem, I'm afraid, is that democratic politicians tend to regard defence rather like old-fashioned medicine: something which is no doubt good for you, and occasionally essential; but which leaves an unpleasant taste in the mouth and is best kept locked away in the cupboard. Opening roads and schools and hospitals is what politicians like to be seen doing, without too much spotlight on the defence budget. As if defence were competing with the social services, rather than constituting the most basic one of them all.

There is, however, a rather better reason for governments not wishing to monopolise what one might call the pro-defence side of the public debate: and that is because the parliamentary democracies cannot afford to allow the fundamentals of defence policy to become a party-political football. The national interest does not change every four or five years; and neither can the main lines of a defence policy which is expected to make sense, and to go on doing so.

There is nothing very original about that thought, or about the conclusion which I draw from it: that we badly need to re-establish in some of the major countries of the Alliance a degree of bipartisanship in our approach to the key issues of defence and East-West relations. Politicians, and especially the leaders of the major political parties, must play a major part in this; and I would very much like to see them doing so. But they can't do it all. And it is perhaps asking rather a lot of human nature to expect someone, who has given up his weekend for political work in the constituency, to spend much of that time looking for common ground with the party opposite.

And that, predictably enough, brings me back to the British Atlantic Committee, and to its sister organisations in other allied countries. They provide something of an importance which cannot be over-stated: a non-partisan framework to mobilise support for the Atlantic Alliance, and understanding for what it is trying to do.

Some of the difficulties in doing so are inherent in the way publicity works. Defence, like so much else, is taken for granted when things go right; and it hits the headlines only when they have gone wrong - or when someone claims that they are about to. The very important political side of the Alliance - the painstaking search for a more constructive relationship with the Soviet Union and the countries of Eastern Europe - tends also to suffer from the "good news is no news" syndrome. Or, when there really is a good story to tell about some constructive development in East-West relations, the credit goes to the individual governments concerned rather than to the Alliance as a whole.

All that is something we can live with, provided that the public debate on the political and military aspects of what the Alliance is trying to do is conducted with the seriousness which those issues deserve; and with a scrupulous honesty. If we on the NATO side are thought to fall short of these high standards in any respect, I shall be more than ready to look into the matter and to see what might be done to improve things. And if there are critics of NATO prepared to do likewise, let me suggest one or two points to them.

First of all, it is neither serious nor scrupulously honest for those who are opposed to nuclear weapons to present their case as if they were the only people around in favour of peace; or as if those who disagreed with them were against it. To argue that Western governments are "against peace", rather than profoundly sceptical of some of the policies which it is suggested might better preserve it, is to debase the coinage of political debate. And it is honest political debate which ensures a flourishing democracy.

It is important also that those who are opposed to a particular policy should explain what they would like to put in its place, and be prepared to discuss the implications. Mgr. Bruce Kent, for example, keeps telling me that it is not the policy of what he calls any of the major Western European peace movements to give the Soviet Union a monopoly of nuclear weapons. But I still don't understand precisely what nuclear weapons he and his colleagues believe that the West should keep; and who should keep them, and where, and under what conditions.

Some, of course, do advocate policies which, by deliberate design or through a fault in the design, would indeed give the Soviet Union either a monopoly or a sufficient preponderance of nuclear weapons to leave the West open to nuclear blackmail. Like the American pacifist who visited us at NATO a few months ago, and said that people were not all that badly off in Poland and that she'd rather that than keep nuclear weapons.

Now that is honest; but I'm not sure that it would be of much help to CND in the great game of petitions and polls. A game in which the object is to collect signatures for "Ban the Bomb"; and not to worry too much about consistency with other objectives. Indeed, it is the often unstated and seldom argued assumption that you can defend your country and ban the bomb, which explains the appeal of the nuclear protest movements to those not otherwise on the red and green fringes of the political tapestry.

The assumption is wrong. It is wrong because it is not open to the Western democracies to ban the bomb: all they can do is to create a situation where the Soviet Union and China are left alone as significant nuclear powers, and then hope for the best. It is wrong also because there is no defence by purely conventional means against a power which could threaten a nuclear strike without fear of effective retaliation. The hard truth of the matter is that we in the West can abdicate the responsibilities of nuclear power; but that we cannot thereby ensure either a world free of nuclear weapons, or a world in which those weapons will never be used.

What we can do is to make clear our belief that there are far too many nuclear weapons in the world, and our determination to reduce them. Where we can do so with safety, we have already shown ourselves ready to take steps unilaterally: for example, the total megatonnage of the American nuclear arsenal has now been reduced to a quarter of what it was in the early 1960s; we removed 1,000 nuclear warheads from Europe in 1979; and we are currently implementing the Montebello decision to remove a further 1,400. But there are limits, both political and military, to what can be done in this way if the Soviet Union is not genuinely prepared to join us on the path of restraint and reduction.

That, of course, is the question to which we would all like to see a positive answer emerge from the meeting between President Reagan and Mr. Gorbachev next month. Not, to be realistic, in the form of completed agreements: the negotiating teams in Geneva have not yet got that far. But Mr. Gorbachev could nevertheless use the occasion to answer - or to suggest answers to - some of the questions which remain open as a result of what he has said so far.

What, for example, is he really trying to do about the SDI? Is it to constrain the American research programme in ways which would in practice allow the Soviet Union much scope for covert work; or, failing that, to maintain an inflexible link between the SDI and reductions of strategic arms, in the hope of exploiting its divisive potential? Or is his position rather that he wants reassurance against the possibility, however unlikely, of a sudden American breakout into strategic defence? Or, to put it another way, against the possibility that the Soviet Union, having agreed to negotiated reductions in its offensive weapons, will wake up one morning to find the effectiveness of what it has left devalued by an American ABM system? There is quite a difference between the two approaches, and it is an important one.

And what, stripped of what seem to be generous ratios of negotiating fat, would the Soviet Union really be prepared to work for by way of reductions in offensive weapons? Fifty percent is a welcome improvement on the previous Soviet position, which was to dismiss as dangerously radical the long-standing American proposal for cuts of 33% in strategic weapons and the total elimination of LRINF. But 50% of what? Do the Soviet leaders really believe that the Americans should be concerned only about systems which can strike the United States, and ignore what is targetted against their allies in Western Europe - and, indeed, against their troops in Europe? If such one-sided definitions and proposals have been kept in the rhetorical inventory as a temporary concession to the propaganda department, that may be understandable; but if the Soviet negotiators were to stick to this arithmetic of the absurd, then that would cast serious doubt on the intentions of the new Soviet leadership.

Let us hope that they will join us in the search for solutions which are fair to both sides, and which can be relied upon to remain so. The question Mr. Gorbachev has to answer is not - as he put it in Paris - "to be or not to be?" Rather, it is whether to work with Western governments to establish and build upon the common ground; or whether to work against them in the hope that their successors will settle for something in which the balance is tilted very much in favour of the Soviet Union.

If Mr. Gorbachev's reaction to that last point is "perish the thought", he will have the opportunity to make that clear in Geneva. If he is tempted, things may take a little longer. And they will take longer still if Western public opinion is not prepared to be robust in its response to propaganda; and cool-headed in response to cases where elements that are new, and perhaps promising, in a Soviet position remain in suspension with many that are not.

The Americans, who have consulted their allies very closely during these negotiations and the previous ones, have made it clear that they welcome the judgement of others on such issues. Our job will be to ensure that the judgements we offer are informed by a proper sense of what is in the interests of the Alliance: not only tomorrow, when there will be headlines to read and perhaps votes to count; but also in the longer term when succeeding generations will have to live with what we have left them.

I am optimistic about the quality of that inheritance. And if Geneva marks the beginning of a more constructive period in East-West relations, and we are able to make some real progress in arms control and disarmament, then no-one will be more happy than I. It would be a reward for much effort on the Western side; and it would offer the possibility of ensuring our security at much lower levels of armament. But it would not avoid the need to maintain a sufficient counterweight, both conventional and nuclear, to the military power of the Soviet Union.

And if progress on disarmament, and on East-West relations more generally, proves slower than we would wish, that too will leave the basic formula unaffected: just as defence cannot safely be neglected in good times, so the lines of communication must be kept open in bad.

In good times as well as in bad, East-West relations - which is what the Alliance is all about - will continue to require rather a lot of a commodity of which democracies often tend to run short: patience. I won't make matters worse by further abusing yours; but patience happens also to be something which you in the British Atlantic Committee help to produce, by showing a non-partisan and consistent approach to the basic questions at issue. That may cost you some headlines, and make you work the harder to exercise political influence. But I have no doubt of the value of that influence; and of your continuing to be able actively to follow the precept of Noah: go forth and multiply.

The implementation of that in the zoological world follows naturally enough, even if it is true that adders have to do it by logs. But in the world of information, it requires fuel as well as energy. The energy of the British Atlantic Committee is not in doubt. And with your help, if I may return briefly to my starting point, I hope very much that we shall be able to ensure sufficient quantities of fuel.