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CENTRE FOR POLICY STUDIES

8 Wilfred Street, London SW1E 6 PL. Tel: 01-828 1176

2nd June 1988

Mrs Tessa Gaisman
10 Downing St
London
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Dear Mrs Gaisman

Hugh Thomas has asked me to send you the attached
for the Prime Minister's box on Friday.

Yours sincerely

Jenny Nicholson

Jenny Nicholson



Prime Minister

8 Wilfred Street, London SW1E 6PL 01-828 1176

Notes for discussion with the Prime Minister
June 6, 1988

1. The Prime Minister's speeches
Canada [see Annex A]; Europe [see Annex B].
Both Europe and the Commonwealth do suggest possible major studies which might be undertaken by the Centre. The background is discussed in both Annex A and B.
2. Mexico
Report on my recent visit to Mexico and future plans.
3. Anglo-Hispanic Conference
in the style of Konigswinter.
4. The British Experience
Wherever one travels now, one sees (in all languages) copies of Gorbachev's book PERESTROIKA. If the Prime Minister were to write, or at least sign, such a volume, she would have a similar impact and do far more good (the problems of "statism", corrupt or politicised unions, intellectual downgrading of enterprise, etc., which Britain faced in the 1970s are to be found everywhere in the "third World"). If the Prime Minister thought it a good idea, a discreet and competent assistant to write drafts could be sought.
5. Peru
[See Annex C]
6. House of Lords
It has been suggested that the Centre might work on plans for a future reform of this House, both powers and membership.
7. The Centre
 - (i) Finance;
 - (ii) New Directors (Tim Bell, Tim Congdon, John Redwood, Sir James Goldsmith, Lord Hanson have all been suggested);
 - (iii) Dinner, June 14;
 - (vi) Other subjects to be pursued at the Centre;
 - (v) Chairmanship of the Centre.

Hugh Thomas

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Annex B

The Prime Minister's "Europe" Speech

1. I know this is a long time ahead, so I have no qualms at the moment in sending to her for her consideration a statement which I made myself in Spain recently to a (tiny) conference of businessmen (most of whom were asleep since it was delivered after lunch). I would suggest first that she might like to choose as the theme of the speech in Brussels the section sidelined in red. Of course, the statement should be put in less informal language but I think that what is said there could with advantage be said by someone with authority; and I think they represent the Prime Minister's views, though it is some time since I talked to her in detail about these matters.

2. The historical section of this speech might say something to the effect that ever since the Middle Ages we have known that Europe should be united (or re-united). The trouble has been that the previous efforts at "collaboration" would always have resulted in the dominance of a single power: Spain (Philip II), or France (Louis XIV and Napoleon), or Germany (the Kaiser and Hitler). Victories of those rulers might have united Europe, but would have resulted in the destruction of all individuality and necessitated the extinction of all local freedoms. That is why Britain fought against those attempts (that's not the only reason but it's a reasonable thing to say). Now we have a real chance of a European union which will preserve both diversity and liberty.

3. I do have a further recommendation, deriving partly from reading for the first time the Durham Report (see ante). The implications of the present moves in Europe - towards "open frontiers", a common European currency, even a European Central Bank, and the Franco-German defence collaboration - have not, it seems to me, been thought through. The people who have thought continually about Europe seem to be the federalists and they, I suspect, did their original thinking thirty years or more ago. Britain determined to enter the Community and make the best of the institutions which were there, and we are doing well. But is there not a case for a really deep consideration in the style and at the length of the Durham Report (150 pages of text)? The "Europe of Nations" has never been carefully worked out, to my knowledge. We could be at a turning point in our history. Have we thought adequately about it? Can the views lightly touched on in my statement at the Escorial be developed in philosophical depth? I would not suggest that I should write this. But someone should.

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If the Government does not want to publish such a thing, the Centre for Policy Studies could, and should; and I could seek a person of substance to write it. Max Beloff, for example, might be a good idea. I have to say that it should be a single person whom we know in advance to be in sympathy with the views I expressed at Escorial.

4. In defence of my own profession, I think that it would be a benefit if studies of the sort I mention were more often entrusted to historians than they usually are; and that we would, as it happens, all benefit if someone were to be asked to write a similar study on the "future development of the Commonwealth". Such a document might save us from many problems. So far as I know, no one has given much thought to considering whether the Commonwealth should be expected to last indefinitely, whether there is a case for (or possibility of) winding it up and, if it is to continue, whether it should be expanded or defined.

Where is "Europe Going"?

Well whenever we raise the question implicit in this matter, specialists in Europe or practising politicians look a little nervous as if we have asked too naive a question. But public opinion would like an answer, particularly since the phrase United States of Europe's is on the agenda and people are talking of a European cultural bank and a European currency. Public opinion's desire for an answer should be satisfied because Britain is not the only European country likely - let us be blunt - to want to think deeply if the United States of Europe were to turn into anything like the federal state which the United States of America has become. Quite apart from anything else the public opinion of Britain has been repeatedly assured that a real surrender of sovereignty was not to happen. Like all difficult questions it seems to me that the answer can only be simple, but there is probably a complex consequence. Europeans as I understand it want to maintain their national differences, their regional eccentricities, their languages even their regional languages but at the same time create a common European identity. The preservation of differences is as important as the insistence on collaboration. The essence of Europe is surely diversity. We all find it perfectly possible to be loyal to several foci of affection: to the family, to the old school or university perhaps, to the pueblo, to the province or region, and to the nation - perhaps also to the civilisation (the West for example). Europe is a new line of affection, with the originality that it is, shall we say, neither national nor supranational but intranational. Useless to argue whether this intra-national focus is at a superior or lower level than that of the state. It depends on the subject under consideration.

Is this unsatisfactorily unambitious? I do not think so. We are not doing what Bismark did in Germany, nor Cavour did in Italy. The conclusion of those great "liberal" achievements should be a warning enough. Nor would we benefit if the world as a whole were to move ultimately towards a world of united continents. That is specifically the nightmare in which we met in Orwell's 1984. Further that would neglect the whole originality of the

. European Community,

European Community, which does offer the possibility of independence alongside international co-operation. Our originality too can easily be a model for other groups of nations which also wish to preserve sovereignty as well as benefitting from economic and cultural union: Central America, the Andes, why not the Arab world one day.

However if we accept the implications of what I have said we should take the need to preserve diversity in unity just as seriously as we have taken the need to achieve harmony. What I am about to say would be certain to seem anti European if it is taken out of context. But, as we travel across Europe of the 1980s, even if we travel across separate countries what disturbs us most is the decline of regional differences in costume, in food, in music etc. As a Spanish poet Jose Moreno Villa once said: "I have discovered in symmetry the root of much iniquity." Octavio Paz in talking of Mexico, said of indigenous Mexico,

"the extinction of each marginal society and each ethnic and cultural difference means the extinction of yet another possibility of survival for the entire species. With each society that disappears destroyed or devoured by industrial civilisation, a human possibility also disappears - not only a past and a present but a future. History has thus far been plural"

qu in Convergences (47)

He added:

"the problem [in modern societies] lies in adapting technology to human needs rather than the reverse, as has been the case so far ... traditional societies must be defended if we wish to preserve diversity."

Gabriel Zaid

(in el Progreso Improductivo)

A Commissioner for European diversity is, therefore, as desirable as one for harmony. This after all follows the grain, follows the trend of affairs within our Community.