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January 30, 1981

POLICY STATEMENTS

3/81. THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE

Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, Prime Minister, in London on January 29, 1981:

A stronger, more self-confident Europe pursuing more coherent policies will benefit the U.S. as well as the peoples of the Community, the Prime Minister, Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, said on January 29.

Addressing The Pilgrims' annual dinner in London, Mrs. Thatcher emphasized that the Atlantic Alliance is the rock on which European security and prosperity rests. But she expressed the opinion that an even stronger Alliance is needed to meet the challenge of Soviet expansionism.

Britain's membership of the European Community cannot and will not lessen the friendship forged by bonds of history, language and their common defense of freedom, said the Prime Minister.

"Nor does closer cooperation within the European Community itself threaten those links. A stronger, more self-confident, Europe pursuing more coherent policies will produce a greater area of stability for democracy. It will benefit the peoples of both Europe and the United States and will give hope to all who would dearly love to have the liberty we take for granted...

"The relationship between Europe and the United States must not be taken for granted. When Americans look abroad, they see not only Europe's

/ancient ...

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ancient parapets. As well as East across the Atlantic, they look South to Latin America and West to the Pacific and Asia.

"But what matters is that the interests and aspirations shared by Europe and America far outweigh the points on which, occasionally, they differ... The Atlantic partnership is and will remain by far the most important bulwark in the worldwide defenses of liberty and democracy."

In 30 years of peace, Europe has grown stronger, Mrs. Thatcher noted. But so have the adversaries of the West. Additional support for the U.S. should be Europe's response to that threat.

"For Europe, the Atlantic Alliance is the rock on which our present security and prosperity is founded. Thanks to it we have enjoyed over 30 years of peace. In those years Europe has grown in strength. But so have our adversaries. The conventional forces of the Warsaw Pact are far more numerous than ours; their equipment improves year by year, and their nuclear armoury is fully comparable with that of the West. Their reach is now world wide.

"Faced with this change in the balance of power, the Atlantic Alliance will have to become still more purposeful and more resolute. Of course we remain ready to respond to evidence of a real Soviet interest in genuine detente. But at present I see none. And meanwhile we must maintain our strength. President Reagan and his Administration have understood the challenge and the need for leadership. They are responding. We in Europe must also show that we understand the challenge and the need to meet it.

"As a first step we must offer greater recognition of the extent of the American effort which guarantees our freedom. If we are safe today, it is because America has stood with us. If we are to remain safe tomorrow, it will be because America remains powerful and self-confident. Setbacks for them are setbacks for us. When, therefore, the Americans face difficulties, we need to say more clearly 'we are with you.'"

NATO Contribution

Although Europe currently provides 90 percent of NATO's available ground forces, even more should be done, said the Prime Minister.

/"Secondly ...

"Secondly, we in Europe must make sure that we are doing all we can to contribute to our own defense. Already, of course, we do a great deal. To note only one point, made by General Haig in Washington the other day: the Europeans provide 90 percent of the ground forces immediately available to NATO's commanders. Ideally, we should all be doing even more. At the least we must make sure that Europe's share holds firm; and that the money we spend is used effectively. This last point has been made by many: the requirement to act on it is greater now than ever."

Coordination of policies across the Atlantic should also be stepped up, she went on.

"Thirdly, both sides must make certain that the arrangements across the Atlantic for coordination on policy and decisions are kept in perfect working order. They did not work well when Afghanistan was invaded, and we must heed that lesson -- especially at a time when we are continuing to watch events in and around Poland with anxiety."

Third World

Helping the Third World countries towards peaceful evolution is yet another way to counter Soviet expansionism, the Prime Minister made clear.

"Beyond Europe, the problems facing the international community are just as pressing and the need for cooperation between Europe and the United States just as clear. We have an over-riding interest in promoting peaceful evolution in the Third World and in repulsing Soviet efforts to increase their influence there.

"Happily there is a growing readiness among the countries of the Third World to recognize an affinity with the West. The invasion of Kampuchea by the Soviet Union's main ally in the East, followed by the Soviet Union's own invasion of Afghanistan, have opened many eyes to the dark reality of Soviet ambitions and to the true interests of the non-aligned...

"In this situation the countries of the European Community with their trade, their aid and their long experience, are uniquely placed to ensure that collaboration between the old industrial

/democracies ...

democracies and the new nations of the Third World develops fruitfully. British military teams are playing a vital part in the formation of the Zimbabwean Army; France has responded to requests for help from a number of African states; Britain and France have together joined with the United States to assure freedom of passage for all through the Straits of Hormuz; and three European Governments have been working together with the American and Canadian Governments in a prolonged effort to help bring Namibia to an internationally recognized independence. I believe that increased cooperation outside Europe between us and the United States must figure prominently in our thinking about the years ahead."

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