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UNITED KINGDOM PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES JANUARY - JUNE 1977

420.43

February 2, 1977

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POLICY STATEMENTS

PS(E) 2/77. COUNCIL OF FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING IN LONDON

Mr. Anthony Crosland, President of
the Council of Ministers of the
European Community, and British
Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary,
in London on January 31, 1977:

At a press conference following the conclusion of the European Community's Council of Foreign Ministers' afternoon meeting in London on January 31st, the President, Mr. Anthony Crosland, briefly outlined the agenda and the joint approaches which had been agreed to the various subjects.

CSCE

"... We started on the CSCE. With the Belgrade preparatory meeting less than five months away ... [w]e were able to endorse a considerable amount of work already done by the Political Committee in preparing common positions... and the need for intensifying consultations in the months immediately ahead...

Middle
East

"We then came to the Middle East and had a very full discussion... We agreed on the high priority and importance which we attach to ... taking advantage of the present favorable atmosphere to make progress... We reaffirmed our views on the main elements of a settlement, which was stated by the Netherlands Representative at

/the ...

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the last U.N. General Assembly. We noted that ... very important visits ... to the Middle East in the near future ... include [those] by the Secretary General of the U.N., by the French Foreign Minister, by the German Foreign Minister, and by Secretary of State Vance...

Cyprus
and
Human
Rights

"We ... discussed the Cyprus and Turkey situation at the Council of Europe. We agreed that the report from the European Human Rights Commission on this case should be handled in the Council of Europe in accordance with normal procedures and precedents... The Human Rights Commission Report is confidential, and until it has been considered ... in accordance with procedure, it would not be proper to comment on it.

Southern
Africa

"We had a discussion on Southern Africa. We endorsed the intention of the Political Committee to make a demarche on Namibia and I reported at some length on the present situation in Rhodesia..."

Human Rights, Hostages

Mr. Crosland said that Ministers had discussed recent developments on human rights in several East European countries and had asked the Political Committee to make a report to them on the significance of these.

The Ministers had agreed that officials should proceed with the drafting of an EEC Convention on the taking of hostages. This follows the statement by the European Council last year calling for the establishment of such a Convention.

Following a later discussion over dinner, two brief statements were issued by the Council, on Spain and Rhodesia.

Spain

"The Nine Ministers have discussed Spain and, like the Spanish people themselves, have condemned the recent wave of terrorism. They expressed confidence that the Spanish people will succeed in establishing a democratic system."

Rhodesia

"The Foreign Ministers of the Nine ... express their deep concern that Mr. Smith's rejection of January 24 of British suggestions for a transitional government has for the time being jeopardised the British Government's attempt to find an agreed basis for negotiation. They deplore the irresponsible attitude of the illegal regime.

/"They ...

"They appeal solemnly to all the parties concerned to continue the search for a negotiated settlement designed to bring about a rapid and orderly transfer of power to the majority of Zimbabwe. They formally declare that the regime cannot expect any assistance from the Nine. On the contrary, the Foreign Ministers of the Nine confirm that they will continue to comply strictly with their obligations relating to sanctions."

Cyprus

In reply to a question concerning plans for a solution to the Cyprus problem, Mr. Crosland indicated that while much thought had been given to the question, inside the Community, care was being taken not to cross wires with the United States.

"None of us desire to cut across a likely American initiative in Cyprus. As we know, an American emissary is likely to go to Cyprus in the very near future, sent by Mr. Vance... We did not want to come out with any public statement at this stage ... lest this get the wires crossed ... but ... a number of countries in the Community have taken a very close interest in Cyprus [and] we ourselves in Britain, for a number of reasons, including the military bases, are deeply and heavily involved."

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