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*Yes Policy
Subject filed in France
PE 3: Unit of Mitterrand*

Extract NFR. PM/Mitterrand 'tete à tete' 10.9.87

solid. Latterly its attitude had seemed, if anything, to become harder. It had given new commitments to the Soviet Government. So long as it continued to resist Solidarity, military intervention was not a real possibility. This was a harsh paradox. The Prime Minister commented that the Party still seemed to be in charge but Solidarity had been suggesting that the Party was not representative of the Polish people. President Mitterrand agreed but added that the Party still held the levers of power. It might, of course, have already been more undermined than he knew. If it were to collapse, that would be the moment when an adventure might take place. It would ^{be} the alarm signal. If Solidarity's bold appeal to workers in other East European countries had not triggered Soviet intervention, it was because the Russians still thought the Communist Party had a stranglehold on the situation. He did not want the Party to grow stronger. That was the dilemma.

The Prime Minister said that it was a very ironic situation. Meanwhile, the economy declined and the West kept pouring in money and food. Perhaps before more was done, there should be an examination of Poland's long-term prospects and of the consequences of giving more aid. President Mitterrand agreed that the right moment had come to do this. We could not refuse Poland the means of survival. But we might end by giving the Soviet system nourishment. One should not exaggerate but there were obvious contradictions in the situation.

The Soviet hesitations about intervening in Poland also owed something, President Mitterrand considered, to Moscow's doubts about the international situation. They were still concerned about the situation in Afghanistan. They were holding forces in reserve because of the confused position in Iran. They were anxious to open arms control negotiations with the West. All these pre-occupations would be greatly complicated by an invasion of Poland. Moreover, the Soviet economy was in a worse position than those of Western countries.

The West should engage in a more precise examination of the reality of the East/West military balance. We needed to know how far to push our re-armament. President Mitterrand said that

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/ he approved

he approved the American intention to modernise their defences and to re-establish the military balance. But to what degree? In both Luxembourg and Ottawa there had been a lack of precision in our analyses. He had been conscious of the same lack of precision in a long discussion he had recently had with Herr Brandt. He (President Mitterrand) was not simply the partisan of war and Herr Brandt that of peace. Nor was he the partisan of re-armament and Herr Brandt of negotiation. It had emerged like this because the analysis was inexact. He was due to discuss all these matters with the Bureau of the International Socialist Movement on 25 September. Chancellor Schmidt would be doing the same on 8 October. He was anxious that the Prime Minister should be kept in the picture about this evolving discussion.

The Prime Minister said she would be very grateful if President Mitterrand could do this. She was much preoccupied with the attitude of certain members of the SPD. President Mitterrand said that the evolution of West German opinion was one of the principal uncertainties in Europe today. One leading member of the SPD had said to him recently that the Russians were more in favour of rearmament than was the United States. Another had said it was better to be red than dead. It was important to bear in mind the Germans' particular position. They had no nuclear weapons. Their country was full of arms and explosives. They did not wish to be a battlefield. This was a subject which would have to be dealt with. The Prime Minister commented that the Russian propagandists had been very active. The arguments of the West had not been advanced with sufficient vigour. President Mitterrand said that the West's willingness to negotiate once our defence capability had been updated was an important element in our propaganda. We must of course be certain that the military situation was in balance or even that we were stronger than the other side. But, that said, we should never refuse negotiations. To refuse negotiations was to play into Soviet hands. The Prime Minister said that she fully agreed.

President Mitterrand said that he had been very happy with his talk with the Prime Minister. A good start had been made.

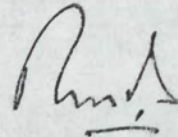
/ The two partners

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The two partners were advancing. The process must continue but with more precision. The members of the two Governments should now continue to explore the various fields with a view to taking rapid decisions in the Community. The Prime Minister agreed.

The meeting ended at 1800 hours.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'Rund', with a horizontal line underneath the final letter.

11 September 1981

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