

CONFIDENTIAL

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RECORD OF POINTS ARISING IN CONVERSATIONS DURING THE
RETURN JOURNEY OF MONSIEUR GEORGES POMPIDOU, PRESIDENT
OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC, FROM CHEQUERS TO LONDON AIRPORT
ON SATURDAY 17 NOVEMBER 1973

During the course of the journey from Chequers to Windsor, the President said that he understood that the press - the French papers, the German papers, and for all he knew the British papers - had announced that Colonel Qadhafi was to visit Paris, and that this visit was to be expected the following Friday. The Prime Minister asked if the President had invited Colonel Qadhafi, or had been given any indication of his plan to visit Paris. The President said that he had not; he supposed that the press had invited him themselves. He supposed that Colonel Qadhafi would stay at the Libyan Embassy. If he were so misguided as to stay at a hotel, he might find that there had been a sudden 400 per cent increase in prices. The Prime Minister described to the President the message which he himself had received from Colonel Qadhafi not long after the beginning of the Middle East war. He said that Britain had recently resumed diplomatic relations with Syria; but he feared that it was impossible to influence the Syrians.

Later in the journey, the Prime Minister reverted to the arrangements for the forthcoming European Summit meeting

CONFIDENTIAL

- 2 -

in Copenhagen. He said that he understood that the Danish Government was proposing that officials should meet on the morning of Friday 14 December, that Heads of Government should not meet until the afternoon of that day, and should then meet again alone on the morning of Saturday 15 December, and that they should have a final session on the Saturday afternoon. To him it would make more sense that Heads of Government should meet first on the morning of Friday 14 December; officials could meet if necessary the previous day. The President's comment suggested that he took the Prime Minister to be suggesting that a meeting of officials should be dispensed with: he was inclined to agree with that, and remarked that the Danes, who did not want political federation, were from their own point of view misguided in suggesting arrangements for meetings of officials which would tend to build political federation into the institutions of the Community. The Prime Minister explained that he did not mind if officials met in advance; he was proposing that Heads of Government should start on the Friday morning in order to complete three sessions by noon on Saturday and to be able to continue on Saturday afternoon if need be. It was towards the end of the meeting, not at the beginning, that flexibility would be needed. The President agreed with the Prime Minister's proposal and the reasons for it. The arrangements suggested by the Danish Government were a conspiracy to make Heads of Government work on Sunday.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

- 3 -

During the course of tea at Windsor Castle, the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, speaking to Monsieur Jobert and Mr. Armstrong, said that he was not in any case an enthusiast for summits, but that, if there were to be summits, they should be small. It was desirable to hold the Community Summit meeting at Copenhagen next month, but it must be kept small. If the arrangements now being proposed were approved, each Head of Government would bring his Foreign Minister and at least three or four officials, and the numbers attending would be more like fifty than ten. It would be as bad as the summit meeting in Paris in October 1972. Monsieur Jobert demurred: it would not be as large as that. But he agreed with the Secretary of State, and remarked that they must join forces at Copenhagen on 20 November to convince their Community colleagues accordingly.

At this point the conversation was enlarged to include The Queen and the President. The Queen thought that a summit meeting of ten would be preferable to a summit meeting of fifty. The President asked who the tenth man was supposed to be. The Secretary of State said that he would be a record-taker.

The conversation was then confined again to the Secretary of State, Monsieur Jobert and Mr. Armstrong. Mr. Armstrong said that he thought that the President and the Prime Minister had concluded that it might be necessary to accept as inevitable, if not very satisfactory, that

Foreign Ministers should come to Copenhagen and meet in parallel, perhaps joining Heads of Government for a final session. Monsieur Jobert said that that was all very well, but what was the point ? What would Sir Alec and he and their colleagues do ? After all, the Tivoli Gardens were not open in December.

Speaking to Mr. Armstrong of his recent visit to Tunisia, Monsieur Jobert said that he had talked not only with the Tunisian President and Foreign Minister but also with Dr. Zaayad, who was in Tunis at the time. The Arabs wanted to be on good terms with Europe, and could shortly be expected to make constructive proposals for an association with Europe, which could well lead to an early return to normal for supplies of Arab oil to Europe. They did not want to incur the odium of European housewives. Their interest in Europe stemmed from their realisation that they needed Europe, because they did not wish to be tied in a client relationship either to the United States or (still less) to the Soviet Union, and they saw the possibility of a mutually beneficial relationship with Europe. In this situation Europe should not take the initiative but wait for the Arabs to do so. If the Europeans made proposals, they would be the demandeurs and the Arabs would be bound to reject them or try to improve them. Monsieur Jobert implied that developments in this direction could be expected in a short time, after the forthcoming meeting of representatives of Arab countries in Algiers. At that meeting there would be a flaming row, though no doubt attempts would be made to cover it up in public, and after that the situation

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

- 5 -

could be expected to develop as he had indicated. He had been asked about the possibility of a conference between the Community and the Arab countries; when he asked how many Arab countries would be represented at such a conference, he was told about twenty.

(SGD) R.T. ARMSTRONG

19 November 1973