



Maneiu Record

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

23 September 1983

Dear Roger

Mr. Manea Manescu, Romanian Vice President

Thank you for your letter to John Coles of 22 September and for the briefing for Mr. Manea Manescu's call on the Prime Minister. This took place at 1000 this morning.

During a protracted exchange of courtesies, Mr. Manescu said that he had been asked to convey his President's greetings to The Queen and Prince Philip. The Romanians were awaiting a Royal Visit with great interest; they hoped a date could be fixed either this year or next. The Prime Minister said that President Ceausescu's visit had been greatly appreciated, and a date for a return visit would need to be fixed. However, she gave no commitment on a date. Mr. Manescu then invited the Prime Minister to visit Romania herself. The Prime Minister thanked Mr. Manescu for this invitation, and said that she would consider it carefully. Finally, he handed over the attached message from President Ceausescu for which the Prime Minister thanked him.

In response to a question from the Prime Minister, Mr. Manescu said that the Romanian economy was naturally affected by the world recession but that his Government was determined to continue "firm and steady" development; there were problems, but they were not insuperable.

Mr. Manescu quickly turned the discussion to the deployment of intermediate range nuclear weapons. He said that President Ceausescu had been very impressed by the success of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. This showed that agreement could be reached in Europe on the vital issue of security. He hoped that the forthcoming Conference on Confidence Building Measures would also be successful. His President was convinced that the best hope for Europe lay in convening a similar conference of all European countries to discuss the deployment of intermediate range nuclear missiles. The negotiations in Geneva touched not only on the interests of the two super-powers but on the interests of all European countries. He hoped that the USA and USSR would therefore postpone the deployment of intermediate range missiles to give more time for discussions. Failing this, the two super-powers should reach an agreement not to deploy any intermediate range missiles in East or West Germany, or in Czechoslovakia. The over-riding need was for both super-powers to reduce their defence

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expenditure and to achieve a military balance at the lowest possible level of armaments. The Romanian Government would ideally like to see total nuclear disarmament.

In reply, the Prime Minister said that the Soviet Union had already deployed its SS20s and completed its modernisation programme. That was why NATO had decided in 1979 to deploy Cruise and Pershing missiles by the end of this year unless the Soviet Union dismantled its SS20s. There had been three years' of negotiations and the American position had been agreed with its NATO allies. It was not therefore clear that an all-European conference would be any more successful. The solution lay in the hands of the Soviet Union. Unless the Soviet Union agreed to dismantle its SS20s, on a verifiable basis, then Cruise and Pershing missiles would be deployed in December. The Soviet Union would take it as a sign of weakness if NATO decided not to deploy these missiles. The Prime Minister said that she hoped the Geneva talks would continue even if a zero option could not be agreed. It might be possible to reach an agreement which would mean that fewer Cruise and Pershing missiles would be deployed than envisaged at present. She agreed wholeheartedly that a military balance could be struck at much lower levels of armaments. No-one would be better pleased if the numbers of strategic, intermediate and conventional weapons could be reduced.

There then followed a short discussion of the situation in the Lebanon. Mr. Manescu said that he felt all foreign troops should be withdrawn from Lebanon, including Israeli forces and the independence of the Lebanese State should be assured. The United Nations should work to achieve this goal. The Prime Minister replied that the situation in the Lebanon was extremely dangerous; the country was essentially partitioned between the Israelis, the Syrians, and a Lebanese State riddled with factions such as the Druze and Christians. The top priority was to secure a ceasefire and to persuade the Lebanese Government to enter into genuine talks on reconciliation. Only then could the withdrawal of the MNF be considered.

The meeting concluded at 1040.

Yours ever

William Rickett

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