



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

15 December 1986

cc/PC

mo

Prime Minister

You may like to be aware of this, which sounds a good idea. N.B. proposal involved

Dear Charles

Foundation for the cohesion of the West:  
21st Century Trust

of  
for K. Brown and  
Sir J. Romson.

Colin Budd's letter of 26 November promised a substantive reply to yours of 20 November after a briefing from Sir David Wills following a working dinner of the trustees of the 21st Century Trust on 8 December.

CDP  
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Sir David's account confirmed that given the letter of 23 October from Mr Jonathan Davidson, Washington Director of the James F Byrnes International Center of the University of South Carolina, to Bernard Ingham. The concept of a 'Foundation for the Cohesion of the West' arose from a Conference on the 'Future of the Western Community' held at the University of South Carolina in October 1985 which was attended by some very senior American and European figures, including Lord Carrington. It identified a problem of growing strains of cohesion in the West, particularly from generational change, at a time when the West - in the sense of broadly democratic societies adhering to common basic values - was expanding. Unfortunately private funds in the United States and elsewhere had cut back their help to international exchange and discussion organisations just when the field of opportunity was expanding and the needs were growing. The conclusion was that new funds and organisations were required.

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The concept adopted was one of new foundations, initially in the UK and USA, to be followed by others in the FRG, France, Japan and elsewhere. They would be funded by endowments from private sources and would work to foster mutual understanding and interest, eg by exchanges on a large scale between young people.

The UK foundation, the 21st Century Trust, is the most advanced at present. The working dinner on 8 December was attended by ten of a still expanding number of trustees. Members include Lords Home and Whitelaw, Mr Callaghan, Dr Owen, Mr Prior, Sir Michael Palliser, the Duke of Westminster, Sir Charles Troughton and Sir David Wills. They also include some Americans, eg Mr Eagleburger, Mr Vance, Senator Mathias, as the intended pattern is of inter-locking boards of trustees. The 21st Century Trust has recently been registered as a charity and has been given an initial £1 million from a private source as start-up money. Sir K Stowe and Sir J Thompson have agreed to take up salaried posts in the course of next year as respectively fund raiser and programme organiser. The aim is to raise a further £1 million for each of two successive years in order to establish a headquarters and begin some activities. Thereafter the aim is to raise £100 million as endowment capital.

The pattern of activity has not yet been worked out in any detail. Sir D Wills and others are much impressed by the Franco-German organisation of youth exchanges and see this as one possible model.

The US equivalent may be entitled 'The 21st Century Foundation'. It is less advanced - partly owing to the health problems of Mr Eagleburger - but has now received a considerable boost from the endorsement given by President Reagan at the Planning Group's first meeting, held in the White House on 25 September. It aims at an endowment of \$500 million.

/No



No progress has yet been made with equivalent bodies in other countries, although Sir D Wills has had some preliminary discussions with eg Baron von Wechmar and Sir J Fretwell.

As regards the suggestion, in the letter to Bernard Ingham, that this concept might be raised by the Prime Minister or others at the Economic Summit next June our comment to Sir D Wills has so far been limited to a sympathetic reaction to the general ideas behind this enterprise and to the observation that much would depend on the extent to which those involved could demonstrate in the coming months before June that it had good prospects and potential for getting off the ground.

Sir D Wills or Sir Charles Troughton would be very willing to discuss it further as required. At no point have they suggested that there would be any approach to HMG for any official funding.

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*Yours ever*

*R N Culshaw*

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