

Sir (John) Oliver WRIGHT**UNITED KINGDOM**

*Ambassador to the United States
(since September 1982)*

Addressed as:

Sir Oliver or

Mr. Ambassador

A diplomat for 35 years, Sir Oliver Wright retired in 1981 after six years as Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany. Only 16 months later, however, he was recalled to serve as Ambassador to the United States. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The British press says that he speaks bluntly and has a knack for stating difficult problems in simple terms. [REDACTED]



During late 1982 Wright publicly criticized this country for imposing trade sanctions against those British firms having contracts to supply equipment for the Siberian gas pipeline, claiming that the sanctions were hurting the Atlantic Alliance more than the Soviets. Wright is a strong critic of the Soviet Union. During a January 1983 public appearance in Washington, he termed the Soviet system "bankrupt" and argued that the West must adopt a threefold strategy in dealing with Moscow. In the NATO area, he said, the West must maintain military strength while at the same time treating arms control negotiations as seriously as the need to maintain military might. Outside the NATO arena, he said, the West must increase aid to the world's developing countries in order to win the hearts and minds of their people. [REDACTED]

Wright has expressed concern about the impact of demographic changes on the Atlantic Alliance. [REDACTED] he noted that as a result of the shift in the US population center since World War II from the northeast to the sunbelt, those Americans who know Europe the best enjoy less influence now than they did in the immediate postwar period. Compounding the problem, he said, is a generational change on both sides of the Atlantic: the current generations did not have the same experiences as did those Allied leaders who fought in World War II and who established the postwar framework, and therefore they do not automatically share the same values—such as support for a strong NATO. The result, he says, is that the United States and Europe do not know each other as well as they did during the years immediately after World War II, a development that he describes as sad. [REDACTED]

Wright was educated at Cambridge. During World War II he served in the Royal Navy aboard destroyers and was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. After joining the Foreign Office in 1945, he held assignments in New York, Bucharest, Singapore, Berlin, and Pretoria. Wright served as private secretary to Sir Alec Douglas-Home when the latter was Foreign Minister and Prime Minister and then as private secretary and foreign policy adviser to Prime Minister Harold Wilson. He was Ambassador to Denmark from 1966 until 1969 and was detailed to the Home Office during 1969-70 as representative to the Northern Ireland Government. Subsequently, he was chief clerk of the diplomatic service and then deputy under secretary of state, responsible for matters pertaining to economics, commerce, and the European Communities. Wright, 62, is married and has three sons. (U)

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