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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

24 June, 1983

Dear Sir,

German Position on INF

The Prime Minister will wish to be aware before seeing Herr Kohl that the German position over INF appears to be becoming distinctly shaky. The CDU coalition put forward a resolution (in response to an SPD resolution) which was passed by the Bundestag last night and which would appear to give the Bundestag the right of veto over INF deployments in Germany. The key points of the resolution are:

- (a) The Federal Government provide an assurance that as soon as possible after 15 November the Bundestag will have a chance of debating the INF negotiations in Geneva, including the question of any cancellation of part or all the deployments, which might be necessary as a result of the negotiations; and
- (b) No stationing of missiles or parts of missiles will take place before the Bundestag debate.

The latter point will cause particular difficulty for the Americans who were envisaging starting to move INF equipment into the Federal Republic in August. It is also most unhelpful to UK interests, since it is bound to draw unwanted public attention to the deployment programme here.

Earlier this week FCO and MOD officials were in Bonn to discuss aspects of the INF negotiating position with the Germans. The UK party were disturbed to find that the German attitude at working level is wavering on such key elements of the Alliance position as

1. The need for equality (this has implications for the Soviet claim to compensation for British and French systems)
2. The need for global (as distinct from purely regional) limits.
3. Whether to include aircraft on essentially Soviet terms.
4. The timing of any new Western move in the negotiations, which the Germans now wish to see introduced earlier in the next round.

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From contacts today with Vice President Bush's officials, it is clear that the Americans are also alarmed at these developments. They would welcome anything we were able to do to impress upon Herr Kohl the need for us all to keep our nerve and to stick by the agreed Alliance position. Mr Burt, the key State Department official accompanying the Vice President, will be recommending to Mr Bush that he do likewise: this may be the last opportunity to do so with Herr Kohl in person before he leaves for Moscow at the beginning of July.

I am copying this letter to Richard Mottram, Ministry of Defence.

Yours ever,
[Signature]

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

(B J P Fall)
Private Secretary

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