



FCS/80/181

OD COLLEAGUESGlobal Negotiations

1. OD colleagues may like to have a brief account of the rather unexpected outcome of recent informal contacts in New York (which I mentioned in Cabinet on 18 December).
2. My Memorandum OD(80)69 of 19 November outlined the position as the German President of the UN General Assembly, Baron von Wechmar, started his informal discussions. Over the past month, a highly restricted group under his chairmanship has considered a series of texts, which he circulated on his personal authority. The latest of these texts on procedures was a considerable improvement from our point of view. We and the Germans could, if necessary, have lived with this text provided others could: but the Americans had difficulty (with which we sympathised) over one passage. However, the developing countries (particularly some OPEC countries) saw even greater difficulties in the text.
3. In these circumstances, and despite some useful progress on the agenda, Baron von Wechmar saw no alternative but to suspend work. Accordingly, the General Assembly adopted a procedural decision on 17 December, inviting the President to continue his consultations and report to the resumed Session in January.
4. It is satisfactory that our defence of the Specialised Agencies has so far been successful and that developments at the General Assembly have turned out in such a way that we have not carried the blame for the latest delay. It is also satisfactory that Western cohesion, particularly between the United States and the European Community, has improved during these informal discussions.

Prime Minister
To note.

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5. Baron von Wechmar apparently envisages a resumption of contacts in early January. But this timetable may not hold, particularly as the American Administration will be in transition. These continuing delays may cause the drive to hold Global Negotiations to lose some momentum. It would be rash for us to encourage this visibly. But if it happens, we need not be unduly troubled. We shall be giving thought to ways of turning such a development to our advantage. We shall also be considering the character of our interests, and the ways in which they might be promoted, if (as still seems the likelier case) the Global Negotiations begin in due course.

RMJ Lyne

*(Approved by Lord Carrington
& signed on his behalf)*

(CARRINGTON)

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

23 December 1980

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