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Prime Minister



I am sure that you do not need to see him. You have Foreign and Commonwealth Office no time on 1 April. Decline?
London SW1A 2AH

Yes
A.F.C. 15/3

18 March 1982

Dear John,

Visit of Bundestag Foreign Affairs Committee:
1 April

Six members of the Bundestag Foreign Affairs Committee (FAC), led by the Committee's Chairman, Dr Rainer Barzel, are visiting London on 1 April, at the invitation of the House of Commons Select Committee on Foreign Affairs. I enclose a copy of their draft programme which includes lunch given by the Lord Privy Seal (Lord Carrington is out of the country). Dr Barzel (personality note also enclosed) has asked whether, additionally, he might be able to call (alone) on the Prime Minister.

We do not think it essential that the Prime Minister see Dr Barzel and I understand that her programme is very full on that day. However, Dr Barzel's committee is influential and he is himself still a figure of considerable weight in his party. The Prime Minister might find it interesting to talk to him (for, say, 15 minutes some time after 1615) briefly.

Yours ever

John Holmes
(J E Holmes)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

VISIT OF BUNDESTAG FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Thursday 1 April 1982

Programme

- c.0900 Arrive at London Heathrow
- 1000- Briefing at FRG Embassy by Dr Ruhfus
1030
- 1040- Meeting with House of Commons Select Committee on
1220 Foreign Affairs
- 1230 for Lunch at 1 Carlton Gardens given by Lord Privy Seal
1245
- 1430- Briefing at 1 Carlton Gardens by Mr Bullard
1515
- 1530- Call on Mr Blaker, Minister of State for the
1600 Armed Forces, MOD
- c.1830 Depart from London Heathrow

BARZEL, DR RAINER

Chairman of the Bundestag Foreign Affairs Committee.

Born 1924 in Braunsberg (East Prussia). Served in the Naval Air Arm from 1941-5, subsequently studying law and economics. Member of the Bundestag since 1957. Singled out by Dr Adenauer and became Minister for All-German Affairs from 1962-3. Erhard left him out of the Cabinet in 1963 in order to satisfy the demands of the FDP. Later the same year he was elected Deputy Leader of the CDU/CSU Parliamentary Party and in 1964 Leader.

At the time of Erhard's resignation in 1966, in which he played a part, he entered the lists as a potential Chancellor. He lost heavily to Kiesinger. His quest for leadership of the CDU after the 1969 election was successful. After being re-elected leader of the CDU/CSU Parliamentary Party in 1969, he sought and obtained in 1971, with Strauss' support, the offices of CDU Party Chairman and Chancellor Candidate of the CDU/CSU. But his party lost heavily in the 1972 elections. Despite having made three unsuccessful bids to become Chancellor, Barzel was re-elected Leader of the CDU/CSU Parliamentary Party immediately after the 1972 election. But he was forced to resign that post and the CDU Party Chairmanship in May 1973 following defeat in the Parliamentary Party of his proposal to support the Government Bill on German entry into the United Nations. Obtained his present job following the Federal Elections in October 1980.

A short, affable, smiling man whose enemies find him oleaginous. Largely bald, and with a permanently tanned face, he is keen on winter sports, particularly curling (although he suffers from a bad back), and good food and wine. Has visited and likes Britain, though he blamed Allied support of Brandt's Ostpolitik for his own fall.

Catholic. Widower. He understands some English but does not speak it. His only daughter, Claudia, committed suicide in 1977.

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