

SECRET AND PERSONAL

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SUBJECT

LEE MASTER

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

9 November 1983

ANGLO/GERMAN SUMMIT

I enclose two records.

The first is of the tete-a-tete conversation which the Prime Minister held with Chancellor Kohl on 8 November. Some parts of this, in particular, remarks made about the United States, are particularly delicate. I should therefore be grateful if you and Richard Mottram would ensure that no copies of this record are made and that it is shown only to the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary and the Secretary of State for Defence. Should you wish to show it to anyone else I should be grateful if you would consult me first.

The second enclosure is a record made by Robin Butler of the only part of the conversation at dinner on 8 November which was of material interest.

I am copying this letter with its enclosures to Richard Mottram (Ministry of Defence).

AC

Brian Fall, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

SECRET AND PERSONAL

RECORD OF A CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE CHANCELLOR OF THE FEDERAL
REPUBLIC OF GERMANY AT 1930 HOURS ON 8 NOVEMBER 1983 IN BONN

Present:

Prime Minister

Chancellor Kohl

Mr. Coles

Herr Starbreit

Interpreter

Interpreter

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Chancellor Kohl said that Mr. Dam of the United States State Department had just visited him. They had discussed a further United States move in the INF negotiations. In two weeks time the Bundestag debate on INF deployment would take place and on the night after the vote deployment would begin. So far, the so-called hot Autumn had been quite bearable. But the next two weeks would be critical. The well-intentioned people in the peace movement - and they were the great majority - were resigning themselves to the fact of deployment. But there were others, probably including terrorists, who might attempt some action which could end in a fatal accident. In which case, all hell would break loose. The Soviet disorientation campaign was phenomenal. But the polls showed that the core of German public opinion had not been touched. On the other hand, two-thirds of the German media were against the Government. Many journalists were completely neutralist.

The Prime Minister asked whether that tendency was increasing. Chancellor Kohl replied that this was not the case so far as the German public were concerned. The problem was not the man in the street but the upper echelons of society. The Prime Minister said that this phenomenon was familiar. People who were well-off wanted their comfortable lifestyle to continue and were ready to contemplate compromise to ensure that it did. Most of the weakness came from the upper middle class who had also provided material for some of the terrorist groups such as Bader Meinhof. Agreeing, Chancellor Kohl said that most conscientious objectors came from this sector of society too. One of his sons was doing national service at the moment. Through him, he met a lot of young Germans who were excellent people, interested in their history and in literature. One of the big problems was the Protestant Church. 70% of young Protestant clergymen, below the age of 40 years, were opposed to INF deployment. In response to a question from /the

the Prime Minister, he said that 50% of these were against anything nuclear, including nuclear power stations. They considered themselves to be social engineers rather than religious preachers. They were full of talk of Latin America and of demonstrations.

But in general the debate was going well. The attitude of the SPD was of course bad and mirrored that of British Socialists. Only 5% of the SPD followed Helmut Schmidt.

The Prime Minister asked whether Helmut Schmidt would vote in favour of deployment. Chancellor Kohl said that he had thought this would be the case up to ten days ago. But it now appeared that Schmidt might find a technical reason to abstain. He was very bitter and was more against the Americans than the Russians. The SPD were now beginning to coalesce with the Greens, for example in Hesse. The Prime Minister said that when Schmidt had come to London she had asked him about his intentions on deployment. He had said that there was no truth in the rumours. In the Bundestag he would speak and vote in favour of deployment. Chancellor Kohl said that Schmidt would certainly speak in favour of deployment at his Party Conference. However, 40% of SPD party delegates were in favour of leaving NATO. This was not representative. There was no anti-American feeling in the working class. Shortly after the American intervention in Grenada, he had visited the hospital at Wiesbaden where some of the United States marines wounded in Beirut were receiving treatment. The American soldiers there had talked with great affection of the kindness of the German people.

Taking up the reference to Lebanon, the Prime Minister said that when she had seen Mr. Dam of the United States State Department she had said that self-defence in the Lebanon would be understandable, but concepts such as revenge and retaliation should be avoided. She had expressed the hope that anything that was done would be narrowly focussed and could be justified in terms of self-defence. Her impression from Mr. Dam was that no decision had yet been made. But

/ on security

on security grounds she would not expect to be told of a decision more than a few hours before its implementation. Chancellor Kohl said that we must hope that the Americans would be reasonable. The attacks on the United States marines had hit them very hard. Then the Grenada intervention had occurred. He had told Dam that the Americans should agree on the reasons for their intervention. Weinberger and Shultz should stop saying different things. And they should not use reasons that others could employ in the future.

On his way back from the Far East he had briefly visited Mrs. Gandhi in Delhi. He had found the Indians very worried that something might happen in Pakistan.

The United States must make sure that Grenada and Afghanistan were not bracketted together. They were quite different. What was the Prime Minister's view now of the events in Grenada? The Prime Minister said that it was wrong for one country to enter the territory of another unless there were clear and overwhelming reasons for such action. In the case of Grenada she had seen no such reasons. It was necessary to remember that Bishop had himself seized power by a coup. As to the new airport, this was being built by a British firm which had made it clear that it had all the characteristics of a civilian installation, even though it could be used for military purposes. On 23 October the British Deputy High Commissioner from Barbados had visited Grenada and had learned from the Governor General not only that British citizens were in no danger but also that Sir Paul Scoon was not requesting military intervention. Following the National Security Council meeting in Washington, we were told that the Administration's attitude was very cautious and that the ship movements were merely precautionary. We knew that the OECS had asked for military intervention and that Barbados and Jamaica had joined themselves to this request. But we also knew that other Caribbean states were opposed to such action. In short we saw no sufficient reason for the intervention. Since it had occurred, information and mis-information had followed in rapid succession. Many people in Grenada and the Caribbean would be glad about the outcome just as the people of Poland and Hungary would be glad if the West intervened there.

It now seemed necessary to re-assess the psychology of the United States. The events in the Lebanon had clearly had their effect. There, the United States had been shown, at least for a time, to be powerless. Was America reverting to previous policies which had ended in the Bay of Pigs fiasco? Did it believe that in its own sphere of influence it could, as a super power, follow policies which others were not authorised to adopt? During her recent visit to North America she had made a series of speeches describing NATO as a totally defensive organisation which threatened no-one. Chancellor Kohl interjected "quite right". The Prime Minister said that the West pursued its objectives of freedom and justice by persuasion not by military force. Therefore, she had felt strongly about the United States intervention and the suddenness with which this highly significant decision had been taken. In those same speeches she had said that it was the Soviet Union that pursued its objectives by force. She had nevertheless made it clear that, since we inhabited the same planet, we stood ready in the right circumstances to talk to the Soviet leadership. Against this background, the United States action was deeply disturbing. She could understand that the popular reaction in America to the intervention was one of enthusiasm but it was necessary for herself and Chancellor Kohl to look at the wider implications. Of course, we had to avoid condemnation in public and we were stressing that it was the future that mattered.

She had asked Mr. Dam whether Grenada was an isolated event or whether the United States was reverting to a kind of Monroe doctrine whereby small countries living in the area of influence of a super power were required to conduct their policies accordingly. She had not expected Mr. Dam to give an answer. Chancellor Kohl and she would not differ greatly in their attitude to these things. Chancellor Kohl said that so far he agreed with the Prime Minister's account.

/ The Prime Minister

The Prime Minister reiterated that we must not let these events undermine the Alliance. In her message to the President on 24 October she had urged him to think of the consequences of his decision for the deployment debate in Europe. Chancellor Kohl said that he subscribed to every word of the Prime Minister's account. This event had come out of the blue - and it was unhelpful to the deployment debate. The Prime Minister said that her immediate reaction had been to seek a Parliamentary debate on deployment. Following Grenada, we needed a firm vote. Now that had been achieved. The United States was upset that our attitude had been one of doubt. But the intervention had had a significance going far beyond Grenada. Unless the Americans made it clear that it was a one-off affair, it would take a considerable time for confidence to be restored.

Hence, she was now concerned about the Lebanon. Retaliation and revenge were not the words of democracy. Action against the headquarters of those responsible for the attack on the United States marines was probably a form of self-defence and therefore legitimate. She had told the President that we did not like the idea of retaliation. Innocent people could be harmed; there would be implications for all members of the multi-national force and the Middle East was in turmoil already. She had made it plain in the House of Commons earlier in the day that all MNF contingents were entitled to take measures of self-defence. If the United States restricted themselves to such measures, then no difficulty would arise. But if they mounted a large-scale operation, the consequences would be very worrying. Chancellor Kohl said that he was worried too. The Prime Minister said that if anything untoward happened, all the MNF contributors would have to get together and decide what was to be done. Possibly the psychology of a super power was different from that of the rest of us - and that might be true of both super powers. Chancellor Kohl said that the Americans seem to combine the military power of 1983 with the categories of thought of Theodore Roosevelt. But time had moved on. The United States no longer understood the psychology of the rest of the world. He had told them that they were making

things very difficult for their friends.

The Prime Minister asked whether Mr. Dam had given the Chancellor any indication of United States intentions in the Lebanon. He had implied to us that any action would be very localised. Mr. Eagleburger of the United States State Department had apparently been in Israel for four days. If a United States/Israeli action was now being contemplated, that could be very damaging. Chancellor Kohl said that he had made exactly the same point to Mr. Dam. He proposed to write again to the Prime Minister.

Reverting to Grenada he had been unable to understand Mr. Dam's account. The central figure in his story was the Governor General. It was therefore very interesting that we had had contact with Sir Paul Scoon on 23 October with the results that the Prime Minister had described. Was the Governor General's house surrounded at that time? The Prime Minister said that it was not, though a curfew was in operation. Chancellor Kohl said that Dam had told him that the United States had had to liberate the Governor General. The Prime Minister said that that was true but the need had arisen only after the invasion. Since then American estimates of the numbers of Cubans had gone up and down. It had become clear that most of the Cubans were genuine construction workers and that the total numbers were much as Castro had stated.

She very much hoped that we were not going to be let down again in respect of the Lebanon. If so, there would be a chain reaction, the final result of which would be hard to see. Perhaps the Americans would have second thoughts, but they had said so much publicly.

In the light of events in Grenada, we had, as previously explained, arranged a Parliamentary debate on INF deployment. The programme of missile deliveries had been adjusted. Chancellor Kohl said that Grenada had complicated the whole matter quite unnecessarily. German

opinion about the event was very confused. Some argued that the German Government should have supported the United States; others that the action should have been opposed. He had just discussed the matter with his Parliamentary Party. There was no real problem there though some members did argue that Germany should have voted with the United States. He hoped that Mr. Dam's briefing of the German press would be sensible. The Prime Minister explained that Mr. Dam's briefing of the British press had led to a series of headlines with the theme "Maggie lashes Reagan". She had stated in Parliament that these reports bore no relation to her discussions.

Chancellor Kohl raised the question of arms for Argentina. The Prime Minister said that the United States intended to certify Argentina on the grounds that it now had a reasonable human rights record. They would then consider selling arms to Argentina. This would put us in great difficulty. She knew that in the case of Germany some previously existing contracts had had to be completed but, in the case of the United States, new contracts would be contemplated.

She suggested that at the joint press conference on 9 November, she and the Chancellor should reaffirm their commitment to deployment. Furthermore, she would explain the position on the British strategic deterrent. Chancellor Kohl said that he wholly agreed. We should make plain that the two-track decision would be maintained and that we would negotiate until the very end. We might also refer to United States intentions to make a new proposal. He was firmly convinced that the Soviet Union would return to the negotiating table after deployment. Brandt had predicted a new ice age - but there was absolutely no evidence to support this. Clearly, there would be no hot war. Western Europe was the safest place on earth at the moment, because any war would have to be a hot war. But he was convinced that there would be no cold war either. A whole panoply of indicators made this plain. He did however think that

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the moment when the Soviet Union broke off negotiations would be a time for serious demonstrations. He had yesterday received a message from Ceacescu, which had also been addressed to Andropov and Reagan. A number of the proposals which it had contained were not acceptable but there was the interesting suggestion that the British and French deterrents should be excluded from the INF negotiations. This was the first time a member of the Warsaw Pact had made such a point. But the rest of the message was not convincing. There was a real chance to make progress with disarmament negotiations in the next two years - two years because no-one could know what would happen in 1984.

The Prime Minister asked whether the Chancellor had any more information about Andropov's illness. Chancellor Kohl said that he had not. But Andropov must be really ill if he could not be produced for 15 minutes at a military parade. However, he did not pretend to be a Kremlinologist. The question must be asked whether if the Americans did something in the Lebanon, the Soviet Union might then take action e.g. in Pakistan or Afghanistan. It would be very bad for the West if the United States lost their moral reputation.

Ever since he had been in politics he had emphasised the moral superiority of America. Earlier, everything had been weighted in our favour owing to Soviet action in Afghanistan, Poland etc. But would American policy now lead to calls for them to leave Europe?

Chancellor Kohl said that the dates proposed for the Economic Summit, namely 8-10 June, were acceptable to him. Some said that Mr. Nakasone might not be able to attend at that time. He had seen him last week and did not think that to be true. Nakasone would have elections this year and should therefore be free to come to Europe next June. But what about President Mitterrand? The Prime Minister said that Mitterrand argued that the European elections on 18 June would be a judgment on his record and that, since the Economic Summit was not likely to give him much comfort, it would be better to have it after the European elections.

But President Reagan would find that very difficult. Her own view was that since Mitterrand had a long time to go before his elections and President Reagan had to face elections in the Autumn of 1984, we should bow to the latter's needs. Chancellor Kohl said that he quite agreed. He doubted whether the Economic Summit would have any effect on the European elections as far as Mitterrand was concerned, except that the latter might draw advantage from it. Nevertheless, Mitterrand had real problems in another connection. Many people were now saying that he would not be able to last out his whole term. The polls were very bad. If the European elections went badly for him, there would be a demand in France for national elections. The result of those, though it had never happened before, might be that Mitterrand would preside over a Government of the Opposition. We should then see whether de Gaulle's Constitution was viable.

The situation in France was rather worrying. Mitterrand would probably be very rigid externally because domestic affairs were forcing him into compromises which were not in line with his policy. There was also a new upsurge of protectionism. Chirac had visited Bonn few days ago and had said that Mitterrand would not last for seven years.

The discussion ended at 2045 hours.

8 November 1983

Chancellor Kohl's Middle East tour

Mr Butler
Too late. Note issued
Pl. file. PZRB
See very small suggestions
J. B. Hand 9/11

At the end of dinner, Chancellor Kohl reported his impressions of his tour of Middle Eastern countries. He said that the King of Jordan wanted to visit London for a talk with the Prime Minister, and then to call in on Bonn on his way back. King Hussein was feeling under pressure from all sides. The PLO had been smashed and had become purely an instrument of the Syrians; the Syrians were hostile to Jordan; and the Israelis were making brutal use of the pre-election political situation in the United States to achieve a fait accompli on the West Bank. Chancellor Kohl had advised King Hussein that a way of solving his problem might be through elections on the West Bank: there were precedents for having in Parliament representatives of ceded territories - for example the French had done so in Alsace Lorraine.

The Prime Minister agreed with Chancellor Kohl's view of the threat to Jordan. She had emphasised the importance of Jordan to President Reagan during her visit to the United States. The United Kingdom and Pakistan had recognised that the West Bank belonged to Jordan, but the United Nations had ^{taken up} ~~created~~ an uncertain position. President Carter had had an antipathy to meeting King Hussein, and the Prime Minister had urged President Reagan to ensure that United States policy enabled ^{the Hashemite Kingdom of} Jordan to survive. Chancellor Kohl said that he was in agreement with the Prime Minister's view. He would write again to President Reagan and support the line which the Prime Minister had taken. Jordan was the victim of a historic injustice. It was not a threat to Israel: indeed, as a stable neighbour it had been a buttress to Israel.

Turning to Egypt, Chancellor Kohl said that the country was still suffering from the shock of Sadat's assassination. Mubarak was firmly in control, but the increase in population and the state of the economy were causing serious difficulties. The country was haunted by the spectre of Colonel Qadhafi, and there was fear of growing Soviet influence among the military because the United States were not prepared to sell arms at reasonable prices, whereas Russia offered a cheap supply of weapons. Chancellor Kohl said that it was important to buttress the Egyptian Government. President Mubarak was committed to the Camp David process, although without enthusiasm, but his confidence in the United States had been destroyed by events in the Lebanon.

/ On Saudi Arabia,

On Saudi Arabia, Chancellor Kohl said that the Iran/Iraq war was the overshadowing influence. The Saudis made ^{verbose} bold statements about Jerusalem and Israel, but Israel was not as much of a danger as proximity to Iran, the prospect of continuance of the Iraq/Iran war, and the spread of fundamentalism through pilgrims. Saudi distrust of the United States was increasing: they believed that the United States would take no effective action in Israel and that United States policy in the Lebanon would ^{lead to} cause partition and an ultimate increase in Israeli territory. The King had said clearly that he would like to be closer to Europe, but there were many internal difficulties, particularly over the growing pressure of women for a role in national affairs. Frau Kohl had been invited to The Queen's Palace, and all the Princesses present had made rebellious speeches on this subject. Ten years ago there had been no girls at Saudi schools: now there were 650,000. The Foreign Minister's sister was studying chemistry in Switzerland which she would never be able to use at home. Another problem was that all the brothers of the Royal Family were now over 60 and it was not clear what would happen when their generation came to an end. Despite these long-term problems however, and a specific problem over a tank which the Saudis had been promised, the atmosphere and reception had been very friendly.

Earlier but which the FRG government were not prepared to supply.

The Prime Minister thanked Chancellor Kohl for giving this valuable account of the impressions derived from his tour of the Middle East.

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