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file 10

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

13 December 1983

Dear Roger,

The Ambassador of the Federal German Republic paid a farewell call on the Prime Minister this morning. I should record some of the points which arose.

Commenting on the European Council in Athens, the Prime Minister said that the Community must sort out its problems. The atmosphere would be healthier if those who were opposed to certain ideas said so clearly. Herr Ruhfus said that the Germans believed that Athens could have healthy repercussions. The feeling in Bonn was that the Council participants were now much more familiar with the problems. The French would have to put up a better performance when they were in the Presidency. Some progress had been made at Athens viz. Franco/German agreement on MCAs. The Prime Minister said that the question of MCAs had to be agreed among the ten Member States for any agreement could be highly inflationary and have its effect on others.

Herr Ruhfus said that one explanation for President Mitterrand's behaviour was that M. Delors, in putting forward his proposals on Community financing, was believed to have exceeded the authority given to him by the French Cabinet in November. The Prime Minister said that she doubted this explanation; at her working breakfast with President Mitterrand, the latter appeared to be completely ignorant of M. Delors proposals.

Herr Ruhfus said that the various issues ought to be settled within the scope of the Stuttgart package. It would be best to return to the normal procedures of the Community and not carry on with the device of special councils.

Reverting to the question of President Mitterrand's behaviour, Herr Ruhfus said that the Germans found him much more forthcoming on security issues than the previous French President. It was Mitterrand who had encouraged the talks

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between Chiefs of Staff provided for in the Elysee Treaty. Germany would continue its bilateral contacts with France about the Athens issues; presumably others would too.

Herr Ruhfus then made some remarks about the dangers of neutralism in the Federal Republic. The problem of the peace movements would not disappear following initial INF deployment. The unrest in the younger generation would continue. They had had no direct experience of the 1940s and 1950s. The problems of the younger generation would be solved only if Europe became more united. The Prime Minister commented that the situation in Germany did not worry her greatly but attitudes in Belgium, Holland and Denmark, did worry her. Chancellor Kohl had never faltered in his determination on the INF question.

Herr Ruhfus said that he believed it necessary that the West should continue to make clear its willingness to conduct dialogue with the East. The recent NATO communique had been useful and Sir Geoffrey Howe had given the German ideas helpful support. In a speech in Berlin yesterday Chancellor Kohl had advocated a US/Soviet summit, even in 1984. The Prime Minister commented that it was not for us to advocate a particular time for the summit. She believed that any summit would have to be prepared from the bottom up - and that President Reagan should only meet Andropov when he was in a strong position and fully ready to deal with the issues. Herr Ruhfus said that there seemed to be some in-fighting in Moscow - it would be useful to build up a dialogue to try to ensure that the internal Soviet debate produced the right results. The Prime Minister said that, although Chancellor Kohl's visit to Moscow had been useful, she did not wish to see Western leaders going to Moscow in procession. In her view President Reagan should work for a summit in about mid-1985.

Herr Ruhfus said that the Prime Minister's message to the new Argentinian President was very welcome. The Prime Minister commented that no-one should be misled into thinking that she was prepared to negotiate about sovereignty, though we were of course ready to work for normal diplomatic relations.

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