

CONFIDENTIAL



FILE
H2

bc PC

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

15 March 1984

WEU: NATO

Thank you for your letter of 12 March concerning the remarks of the German Ambassador about the alleged French view that a revitalised WEU would be a stepping stone to the full integration of France with NATO. The Prime Minister has noted that your enquiries suggest that it is highly unlikely that the French are contemplating re-integration into NATO's military structure.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Richard Mottram (Ministry of Defence).

A. J. COLES

Brian Fall, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

CONFIDENTIAL

CST



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

12 March 1984

Prime Minister.

As expected.

A.S.C. 13/3.

Dear John,

In your letter of 28 February you wrote that the new German Ambassador, during his call on the Prime Minister that morning, said that the Germans had received private indications that France regarded a revitalised WEU as a stepping stone to full integration with NATO.

We were surprised by this, and consulted our Embassies in Paris and Bonn. Their replies confirm our view that it is highly unlikely that the French are contemplating reintegration into the military structure of NATO. Indeed, in his statement to the Dutch Parliament on 7 February, Mitterrand stated categorically that there was no question of this. At the same time he reaffirmed France's wholehearted commitment to the North Atlantic Alliance.

Sir John Fretwell has commented that it cannot be completely excluded that in the longer term President Mitterrand envisages edging France closer to the integrated structure of NATO via bilateral cooperation, in particular with the FRG; but the President's style is such that even his Ministers probably do not know all that he really thinks.

A rather similar remark to that of von Wechmar has been reported by Washington as having been made by the German Ambassador on a recent occasion, when he said that discussions in WEU could have the beneficial effect of bringing France closer to NATO, and that was a valuable plus. The response of the French Ambassador, who was present, was to say that the reactivation of WEU would serve the objective of improving European coordination on defence, particularly in maintaining a defence industry and producing joint weapons systems while ensuring that there was no decoupling from the United States.

/We

CONFIDENTIAL

-- 2 --



We are looking more widely at the implications of these ideas, and Sir Geoffrey Howe has asked for papers to be put to him in April. (The next Ministerial meeting of the WEU is on 24 May).

I am sending a copy of this letter to Richard Mottram.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'B J P Fall', with a stylized flourish at the end.

(B J P Fall)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

CONFIDENTIAL

Germany Relations Pt 2

