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Prime Minister Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

Her, to SPD's  
future Chancellor candidate.  
see

14 October 1985

Agree to  
him briefly?  
Dear Charles, CDP

Yes no

Visit by Johannes Rau, SPD Candidate for  
Chancellor in the 1987 FRG Elections

Our Embassy in Bonn have reported that Johannes Rau, the Minister-President of North Rhine Westphalia, wishes to visit Britain on 21 and 22 November. I enclose a personality note.

The key point about Rau is that he recently accepted nomination as the SPD's candidate for Chancellor in the 1987 FRG elections. The formality of replacing Vogel as Chancellor candidate will not be completed until the SPD Federal Party Conference next August, but Vogel has already agreed to withdraw.

Rau has asked if he could see the Prime Minister during his stay. Sir Geoffrey realises that it is not long since she made time to see Vogel, but hopes that she will be able to agree to a short meeting with Rau if she can possibly fit one in. The Foreign Secretary plans to give Rau a meal during his visit.

Rau's elevation owes much to his striking success in the Land elections of May 1985 in North Rhine Westphalia, the most populous (17 million) and industrialised of the Federal German Laender, and home of HQ British Forces Germany. While the most likely outcome of the January 1987 Federal elections remains a CDU/CSU/FDP victory, German opinion polls suggest that Rau himself is currently more popular than Kohl, and will put up a better fight than Vogel.

Rau will be accompanied on this visit (at German expense) by his wife Christina (nee Delius) who has close connections with Britain, and is clearly a potential asset for us. She is a granddaughter of former President Heinemann, whose family still have a house in London and who decided to give his children a broader outlook through a British education. She studied at Gordonstoun, the University of Aberystwyth and King's (London). She is said to be anglophile, bilingual and an avid reader of the British press.

/Rau

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Rau is also keen to see the Secretary of State for Defence. There is a continuing need to expose SPD policy-makers to the realities of East/West relations, and the need for NATO cohesion. The Foreign Secretary hopes that Mr Heseltine will be able to find time for Rau, and a copy of this letter therefore goes to Richard Mottram.

*Yours ever,*

*Chris Budd*

(C R Budd)  
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq  
No 10 Downing Street

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RAU JOHANNES

Minister-President of North Rhine-Westphalia (population 17 million) since 1978. Re elected May 1985. Deputy Chairman of the SPD since 1982.

Born 1931 in Wuppertal. A publisher by profession and member of the SPD since 1957. In 1958 he became Chairman of the Young Socialists in Wuppertal and was simultaneously on the editorial staff of the "Gesamtdeutsche Rundschau" 1957-60 co publisher of the magazine "Politische Verantwortung-Evangelische Stimmen". In 1967 became leader of the SPD Parliamentary Party in the NRW Landtag replacing Herr Kuhn when the latter became Minister President. Was elected Lord Mayor of Wuppertal in 1969 appointed Land Minister of Science and Technology after the 1970 Landtag elections and continued in the 1975 Cabinet. Became Minister President in September 1978 after Kuhn's resignation. A Protestant active in church affairs and member of the German Evangelical church Synod. Scored a major success for the SPD in the Land election of May 1985, which gave him the impetus to overtake the SPD leader (Vogel) in the opinion polls.

A non-ideological socialist, his style is to seek consensus solutions. An excellent speaker, he has a well developed sense of humour and a sound instinctive understanding of the interests and prejudices of the industrial workers of the Rhine Ruhr conurbation. Clearly in line to succeed Brandt as SPD Chairman, he has been at pains to broaden his grasp of international affairs. In September 1985 he accepted nomination as the SPD's Chancellor candidate in the 1987 Federal elections.

Long regarded as a confirmed bachelor, in 1982 he surprised even his colleagues by his marriage in London to the granddaughter of the former President Heinemann, who is over 25 years his junior. He speaks some English. His wife is bilingual, having been to school at Gordonstoun and taken an MA at King's College, London. One daughter, one son.

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10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

16 October 1985

X REF

The Prime Minister has seen your letter of 14 October about the forthcoming visit by Mr. Johannes Rau, the Minister-President of North Rhine Westphalia.

Mrs. Thatcher has agreed to see Mr. Rau and I have provisionally arranged that this should be at 9 o'clock on Friday 22 November.

(Timothy Flesher)

Colin Budd, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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JB



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

15 November 1985

Dear Charles,

Visit by Johannes Rau, 20-22 November

The Prime Minister has kindly agreed to see Herr Rau at 0900 on 22 November (your letter of 16 October). I would be grateful to know whether the FRG Ambassador, Baron von Wechmar, might attend. He would take the place of a note-taker on the German side.

I know that the Prime Minister likes to keep these meetings as small as possible. However, the Foreign Secretary sees advantage in this case in agreeing to the Ambassador's participation. The meeting takes place five days before the Anglo-German Summit on 27 November. Rau is highly publicity-conscious (he is bringing five journalists with him), and the call on the Prime Minister will be the centrepiece of his visit. Having in mind Chancellor Kohl's concern at the misleading reports of the Prime Minister's discussions with Hans-Jochen Vogel shortly after the Milan European Council, we think it important that Chancellor Kohl should get an accurate account of the meeting, rather than simply read about it in the German press.

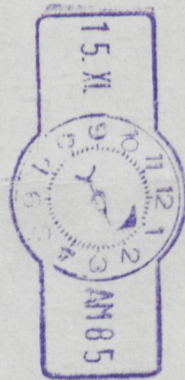
Rau has asked for a brief photo-call before the meeting. If the Prime Minister is content, Rau's photographer would be present for this, along with one from the COI.

Yours ever,  
Colin Budd

(C R Budd)

C D Powell Esq  
10 Downing Street

Germany: Kets; Pr 3





10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

17 November 1985

**VISIT BY JOHANES RAU**

Thank you for your letter of 15 November about the arrangements for Herr Rau's visit.

I agree that it would be appropriate for the German Ambassador to attend and also for a photographer to be present at the beginning.

(Charles Powell)

Colin Budd, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

21 November 1985

Dear Charles,

Call by Herr Rau on the Prime Minister

You will recall that as matters stand Rau will be accompanied by the FRG Ambassador. That arrangement was initially accepted by Rau's office, but they have now started to press for Rau to be accompanied also by the Head of the State Chancellery in North Rhine Westphalia, Dr Klaus Leister (I attach a personality note).

You may like to consider letting Leister in, though we shall of course pass on a negative response if that is your preference. We are quite clear that Leister should not be allowed to attend in place of the Ambassador.

Yours ever,  
Colin Budd

(C R Budd)  
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq  
10 Downing Street

CCP  
CC BUP



DR KLAUS DIETER LEISTER

47 years old. State Secretary and Head of State Chancellery. Previously State Secretary in North Rhine Westphalia Interior Ministry, State Secretary in FED Ministry of Defence, Deputy Secretary in FED Ministry for Economic Cooperation. 1974-79 leader of office of FED Minister of Finance.

Close associate of Helmut Schmidt. Holds Hon KBE (1978 after State visit). Speaks fluent English.



10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

21 November 1985

**CALL BY HERR RAU ON THE PRIME MINISTER**

Thank you for your letter of 21 November about who should accompany Herr Rau.

Exceptionally we can agree to the inclusion of Dr. Leister.

(Charles Powell)

C.R. Budd, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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