



file LPO
C: Reunited

SUBJECT CC MASTON

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bc: PC
CDP

From the Private Secretary

See paper.

10 January 1990

GERMAN REUNIFICATION

The Prime Minister told the Foreign Secretary this morning that she would need to have some specific proposals to put to President Mitterrand on 20 January on how Britain and France could work together more closely. This pre-supposed that we had first worked out our own ideas in rather more detail in relation to German reunification. We should not simply regard this as inevitable and wait for events to overtake us. The statement made at the Strasbourg European Council was useful so far as it went but was hardly operational. We needed to think through much more carefully the implications of reunification and the conditions which would have to be fulfilled if it were to proceed with the full support of Germany's allies. She cited as an analogy our position on membership of the ERM, which was cast in terms of: "we shall join when". The view which she had articulated from the beginning was that priority must go to establishing democracy, freedom and the rule of law throughout Eastern Europe, and this remained her view. We also had to be clear about the implications for NATO and how our common security needs could be met in circumstances where Germany was reunified. We had to consider the question of borders, of East Germany's relationship with the European Community and of the wider application of the principle of self-determination. We also had to think through the consequences for Gorbachev: we did not want to lose the greater good of seeing his reforms succeed throughout the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in order to satisfy a German wish for faster progress with reunification.

The Foreign Secretary said that work was already being done on these points. He would let the Prime Minister have the results before her meeting with President Mitterrand, together with some specific proposals which she could make at that meeting. What we could not produce was a blue print for stopping German reunification. The Prime Minister accepted this, while stressing that equally we should not approach work on the German question in the spirit that reunification was inevitable and all we had to do was adjust to it.

you signed.
[Signature]
CHARLES POWELL

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