

ADVANCE COPY

CONFIDENTIAL
FM MOSCOW
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELNO 274
OF 161528Z FEBRUARY 90
INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON, PARIS, BONN, UKDEL NATO

PERSONAL FOR AMBASSADORS..MY CALL ON CHERNYAEV: GERMANY
SUMMARY

1. CHERNYAEV SAID THAT FREQUENT ANGLO/SOVIET EXCHANGES ON GERMANY WERE VERY DESIRABLE IN THE PRESENT FAST MOVING SITUATION. GERMAN REUNIFICATION WAS NOW INEVITABLE. BUT FOR PRACTICAL REASONS IT WAS MOST UNLIKELY TO HAPPEN THIS YEAR. HE EXPRESSED HIMSELF AGAINST A CONTINUATION OF GERMANY IN NATO, BUT DID NOT RULE OUT A MANAGED WITHDRAWAL OF SOVIET TROOPS FROM EAST GERMANY AFTER A TRANSITION PERIOD AND IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CFE AGREEMENT. HE SAID THAT KOHL HAD MADE A POSITIVE IMPRESSION ON GORBACHEV.

DETAIL

2. I CALLED ON GORBACHEV'S DIPLOMATIC ADVISER, CHERNYAEV, ON 16 FEBRUARY. HE BEGAN BY SAYING THAT MEDVEDEV HAD REPORTED MOST POSITIVELY ON HIS VISIT TO BRITAIN. MEDVEDEV BELIEVED THAT THERE WAS SCOPE FOR EXPANDING PRACTICAL COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, ESPECIALLY FOR EXAMPLE IN PARLIAMENTARY MATTERS. HIS COLLEAGUES HAD AGREED. MEDVEDEV HAD BEEN PARTICULARLY WARM ABOUT HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH THE PRIME MINISTER, ESPECIALLY ON GERMANY. THE RUSSIANS THOUGHT IT IMPORTANT TO MAINTAIN FREQUENT CONTACTS WITH US OVER GERMANY, TO REDUCE THE OBVIOUS RISK OF CONFUSION IN SUCH A QUICK MOVING SITUATION. GERMAN UNITY WAS INEVITABLE, AND THE GERMAN PEOPLE WERE ENTITLED TO IT. BUT THE MODALITIES WERE EXTREMELY IMPORTANT IF THE INTERESTS OF ALL WERE TO BE PRESERVED.

3. I SAID THAT WE WELCOMED THE BORAD PROCEDURAL AGREEMENT IN OTTAWA. THE TWO PLUS FOUR FORMULA SHOULD ENABLE US TO HANDLE THE EXTERNAL ASPECTS OF GERMAN REUNIFICATION, WHILE MAINTAINING THE PROPER RELATIONSHIP WITH THE INTERNAL PROCESSES IN GERMANY. CHERNYAEV WONDERED WHETHER THE FOUR PLUS TWO (AN ARITHMETIC WHICH HE AND GORBAHCEV PREFERRED) COULD MEET BEFORE THE EAST GERMAN ELECTIONS ON 18 MARCH. I SAID THAT MY UNDERSTANDING WAS THAT EVERYBODY IN OTTAWA HAD RECOGNISED THAT THE FIRST SUCH MEETING WOULD BE AFTER THE ELECTIONS. CHERNYAEV WAS WORRIED THAT THE MEETINGS OF THE TWO PLUS FOUR WOULD CONSIST SIMPLY OF THE PRESENTAITON TO THE RUSSIANS BY THE WESTERN ALLIES, ON A TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT BASIS, POSITIONS PREVIOUSLY AGREED BETWEEN THEM. I SAID THAT THIS WAS NOT THE INTENTION: BUT WE

WOULD OF COURSE BE CONSULTING OUR ALLIES, INCLUDING THE GERMANS, VERY CLOSELY THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS. CHERNYAEV SAID THAT HE DID NOT DOUBT THAT. THE TWO GERMANIES WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY CONTINUE THEIR BILATERAL EXCHANGES MEANWHILE. CHERNYAEV SAID THAT IN THE LATEST ROUND OF BILATERAL EXCHANGES KOHL HAD BEEN PLAYING GAMES. MODROW HAD GONE TO BONN IN THE BELIEF THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAD FIRM PROPOSALS FOR A MONETARY UNION, BACKED UP BY A SUBSTANTIAL LOAN. KOHL HAD DISAPPOINTED MODROW, PERHAPS HE WAS UNWILLING TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE STABILISATION OF THE EXISTING EAST GERMAN GOVERNMENT. BUT THAT GOVERNMENT AND THE SOCIAL, ADMINISTRATIVE, AND ECONOMIC ARRANGEMENTS IN EAST GERMANY, WERE HOLDING UP ADEQUATELY FOR THE TIME BEING.

4. CHERNYAEV SAID THAT THE RESULT OF THE 18 MARCH ELECTION WAS PREDICTABLE: ONLY A MINORITY OF PEOPLE IN GERMANY NOW OPPOSED UNITY, AND THE (EAST GERMAN) SOCIAL DEMOCRATS WOULD GET AT LEAST HALF THE VOTES. KOHL SEEMED INTENT ON PUSHING AHEAD VERY RAPIDLY THEREAFTER. BUT CHERNYAEV THOUGHT IT HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT GERMANY WOULD BE REUNITED BY THE END OF 1990 FOR A WHOLE LOT OF PRACTICAL REASONS. IT HAD TAKEN THREE YEARS TO ASSIMILATE THE SAAR, AND THE PROBLEMS OF ABSORBING EAST GERMANY WOULD BE VERY MUCH GREATER. MOREOVER, THE PERSONAL INTERESTS OF MANY LEADING EAST GERMANS COULD BE DAMAGED BY EARLY REUNIFICATION: IT WAS UNLIKELY, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT THE NEW MEMBERS OF THE VOLKSKAMMER WOULD WANT TO BE MERGED RAPIDLY WITH THE BUNDESTAG. A SLOWING DOWN OF THE PROCESS WAS IN EVERYBODY'S INTERESTS, INCLUDING KOHL'S: HE SEEMED NOT TO HAVE THOUGHT THROUGH ALL THE IMPLICATIONS YET.

5. I SAID THAT TERE WOULD OF COURSE BE MANY PRACTICAL PROBLEMS TO BE RESOLVED IN THE COURSE OF GERMAN REUNIFICATION. THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY WOULD BE MUCH CONCERNED WIHT THE LEGAL AND ECONOMIC ASPECTS. OUR NATO ALLIES WOULD NEED TO BE REGULARLY CONSULTED. I WAS THEREFORE UNWILLING TO PREDICT THE COURSE OR TEMPO OF EVENTS.

6. CHERNYAEV SAID THAT NEITHER KOHL NOR MODROW HAD RAISED THE ISSUE OF SOVIET TROOPS IN EAST GERMANY DURING THEIR RECENT VISIT. BOTH MEN UNDERSTOOD THAT RAPID WITHDRAWAL WOULD CAUSE THE SOVIET UNION POLITICAL AS WELL AS ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES. NEVERTHELESS, THE MFE NEGOTIATIONS POINTED TO A SUBSTANTIAL REDUCTION OF TROOP LEVELS IN THE GDR. IN THE LONGER RUN, THE RUSSIANS WANTED THE REMOVAL OF ALL STATIONED TROOPS IN EUROPE, IN THE CONTEXT OF SETTING UP A EUROPEAN SECURITY SYSTEM.

7. I SAID THAT WE BELIEVED THAT IT WAS IN THE GENRAL INTEREST OF ALL EUROPEANS THAT GERMANY SHOULD REMAIN IN NATO: THIS - TOGETHER WITH GERMAN MEMBERSHIP OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY - WAS THE BEST WAY OF PROVIDING A STABLE SECURITY FRAMEWORK WHICH WOULD MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF GERMANY'S EASTERN AND WESTERN NEIGHBOURS, AS WELL AS OF GERMANY ITSELF. TO MEET UNDERSTANDABLE SOVIET NEEDS, IT MIGHT BE

POSSIBLE TO AGREE THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO STATIONED NATO TROOPS IN WHAT WAS FORMERLY THE DDR. THERE HAD ALSO BEEN TALK OF SOVIET TROOPS REMAINING IN THE DDR FOR A TRANSITION PERIOD.

8. CHERNYAEV SAID THAT THIS WAS A MAJOR POINT OF DIFFERENCE BETWEEN US. THE RUSSIANS WERE FIRMLY AGAINST THE IDEA THAT A UNITED GERMANY SHOULD REMAIN IN NATO. HE FULLY UNDERSTOOD THE ARGUMENT THAT THIS WOULD ENHANCE THE STABILITY, AND HE DID NOT NECESSARILY REJECT IT. THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP CONSIDERED THAT DEMOCRACY WAS NOW DEEPLY ROOTED IN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC, AND THAT A UNITED GERMANY COULD NEVER POSE THE SAME THREAT AS HITLER'S GERMANY HAD DONE. THEY DID NOT IN FACT ATTACH MUCH IMPORTANCE TO THE ACTIVITIES OF THE REPUBLICAN AND NEO-NAZI GROUPS. BUT FOR THE SOVIET PEOPLE THINGS WERE DIFFERENT. THEY FEARED AND DISLIKED THE GERMANS, AND REGARDED THE ARRANGEMENTS SET UP AFTER THE WAR AS BEING THE PROPER REWARD FOR VICTORY AND A NECESSARY GUARANTEE OF SOVIET SECURITY. SO THERE WAS AT THE VERY LEAST A MAJOR POLITICAL PROBLEM FOR THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT.

9. CHERNYAEV ASKED WHY WE BELIEVED THAT NATO SHOULD REMAIN AS A DEFENSIVE ALLIANCE, EVEN THOUGH THE RELATIONSHIPS IN EUROPE WERE BEING TRANSFORMED. I SAID THAT ALL WESTERN GOVERNMENTS FIRMLY BELIEVED THAT THE SUCCESS OF PERESTROIKA WAS IN THEIR INTERESTS. BUT THIS SUCCESS WAS NOT ONE HUNDRED PERCENT CERTAIN. MOREOVER, THE GEO-STRATEGICAL FACTS REMAINED IMMUTABLE. ONE NUCLEAR SUPER-POWER - AMERICA - WAS ACROSS THE OCEAN, THE OTHER - THE SOVIET UNION - WAS PERMANENTLY PRESENT IN EUROPE. WE DID NOT EXPECT A NEW STALIN TO EMERGE. BUT THESE WERE SUFFICIENT REASONS FOR THE WESTERN EUROPEANS TO WANT TO RETAIN THEIR DEFENSIVE ARRANGEMENTS, INCLUDING THE ALLIANCE WITH THE UNITED STATES, EVEN IF THESE WERE TO EVOLVE. CHERNYAEV ACCEPTED THE GEO-STRATEGIC ARGUMENTS CHEERFULLY ENOUGH, THOUGH HE WAS CLEARLY SLIGHTLY NERVOUS AT THE IDEA THAT OUR DETERMINATION TO RETAIN NATO REFLECTED A BELIEF THAT GORBACHEV MIGHT FAIL.

10. WE THEN DISCUSSED THE ISSUE OF FRONTIERS. CHERNYAEV SAID THAT THE SOVIET POSITION ON POST-WAR BOUNDARIES REMAINED FIRM. PROPER GUARANTEES WERE NEEDED, AND THESE COULD PERHAPS BEST BE AVOIDED BY THE CONCLUSION OF A FORMAL PEACE TREATY. IN THE MEANWHILE, ^{provided} ANY STATEMENT BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT RECOGNISING THE PERMANENCE OF THE FRONTIERS WOULD BE USEFUL. KOHL'S DETERMINATION NOT TO BE DRAWN - FOR PERHAPS UNDERSTANDABLE ELECTORAL REASONS - WAS A NEGATIVE FACTOR. CHERNYAEV HAD EVIDENTLY NOT THOUGHT ABOUT THE MODALITIES, EG THAT A PEACE CONFERENCE INCLUDING ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE WAR-TIME ALLIANCE WOULD NEED TO INCLUDE BRAZIL: OR THAT THE CSCE 35 MIGHT NOT BE AN IDEAL GROUPING, FOR A FORMAL NEGOTIATION PERHAPS BECAUSE THE CYPRIOTS MIGHT SEE ANALOGIES BETWEEN THEIR DIVIDED CONDITION AND THE GERMAN ONE.

11. CHERNYAEV GAVE SOME ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND COLOUR TO LAST WEEK'S TALKS BETWEEN KOHL AND GORBACHEV. THE ATMOSPHERE HAD BEEN VERY GOOD, AND THE EXCHANGES HAD BEEN OPEN AND FRANK. KOHL HAD EMPHATICALLY REPEATED THAT HE DID NOT WANT GERMAN UNITY TO AFFECT SOVIET INTERESTS ADVERSELY. GORBACHEV BELIEVED THAT KOHL WAS A SUBSTANTIAL STATESMAN, WHO CLEARLY GRASPED THE HISTORICAL SCALE OF WHAT WAS HAPPENING: AND THAT HE WAS A MAN TO TRUST. BUT KOHL WAS ALSO A HIGHLY SKILLED POLITICIAN WITH ELECTORAL AND PERSONAL AMBITIONS: HE CLEARLY THOUGHT THAT HE COULD GO DOWN IN HISTORY, AND IN AN ALL-GERMAN ELECTION, IF HE COULD BE THE STATESMAN WHO HAD REUNITED HIS COUNTRY. THIS HAD COLOURED HIS PRESENTATION TO GORBACHEV, AND HAD GIVEN RISE TO A CERTAIN 'EUPHORIA' IN HIS JUDGEMENTS.

12. CHERNYAEV SAID HE WOULD REPORT OUR CONVERSATION TO GORBACHEV. HE MUCH WELCOMED OUR EXCHANGES. HE ALSO GAVE ME SOME ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND TO CURRENT DOMESTIC SOVIET POLITICS. I SHALL REPORT SEPARATELY.

13. I WOULD BE GRATEFUL IF CHERNYAEV'S VIEWS AND INDEED THAT FACT OF MY CALL ON HIM, COULD BE PROTECTED IN ANY EXCHANGES WITH OUR ALLIES.

~~_____~~
BRAITHWAITE

FCO PLEASE PASS TO CHARLES POWELL NO 10 DOWNING STREET
YYYY

DISTRIBUTION

15

ADVANCE 15

.BERLIN/INNER-GERMAN RELATIONS
.(WIDE)
PS
PS/PUS
MR P J WESTON
MR RATFORD
CHARLES POWELL, NO 10 D.ST
HD/WED

HD/SOVIET
HD/NEWS
RESIDENT CLERK
MR S MCCARTHY SEC(NATO/UKP)MOD
WG CDR ANDREWS DCTS NATO MOD
PRESS SECRETARY NO 10
MRS GLOVER LEGAL ADV

NNNN