

CONFIDENTIAL

Reference .....

Mr Coles ✓

cc: Mr Butler  
Mr Fall  
Mr Ingham  
HM Ambassador  
Mr Goulden

LEBANON: POSSIBLE MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT  
REAGAN

I attach a draft message on which you and  
others will certainly have comments in the  
morning.

*J Bullard*

J L BULLARD  
8 November 1983



D R A F T

MESSAGE FROM CHANCELLOR KOHL TO PRESIDENT REAGAN

Since Kenneth Dam's brief but very valuable visit here on Monday I have been thinking further about the various issues which he discussed with me and with Hans Dietrich Genscher. Unquestionably the most important of these is the problem of INF deployment. As you know, I see this as the primary task of the Western alliance in the current phase. I was most grateful for the suggestions brought to me by Kenneth Dam for a possible new move to be made by the United States at the negotiations in Geneva. This is exactly what I had in mind when I sent you my recent message, and I have no doubt that a fresh and specific offer on the lines you are now considering would be valuable to me in the handling of German public opinion during the crucial next few weeks.

As part of the same exercise, it is obviously essential to frustrate the persistent efforts of the Soviet Union to split the Atlantic alliance, just at the moment when unity is more than ever needed to ensure that deployment is carried out according to plan. ~~It seems to me that~~ We are witnessing a very extensive campaign on the part of the Soviet Union to sow doubts in your country and in Western Europe about our mutual reliability. We have seen this, for example, over Grenada, and you may have noticed the efforts my Government have been making to combat the Soviet line on this issue.

A potentially even more <sup>divisive</sup> ~~explosive~~ subject is Lebanon, which came up both in my talks with Kenneth Dam and also when I saw Margaret





Thatcher here yesterday and today at our twice-yearly summit meeting. I can imagine how ~~anxious~~ anxiously you must be considering the question whether, after this lapse of time, and with the cycle of violence in Lebanon at a still higher pitch, it would still be right for the United States to respond in some way to the ~~gas~~ ghastly attack which claimed so many lives on 23 October. The decision can only be yours, and of course I fully respect your liberty to take such action as you think necessary in the exercise of your undoubted right of self-defence against the threat to your forces. I am sure, too, that you understand very well the need to use the language of self-defence rather than that of retaliation, still less revenge;+ and that you will give full weight to <sup>all</sup> the considerations which I find so powerful: the possible damage to the cause of reconciliation in Lebanon, on which so much depends; the risk of a further extension of the war in the Gulf, if an Iranian target is involved; and the opportunity for the Soviet Union to increase still further its influence in Syria, and through Syria in the entire region; ~~and~~ ~~the possible boost to the thoughtless~~ <sup>anti-</sup> Americanism which, as I found ~~on my recent trip to the area, is unfortunately still widespread.~~

Together with these thoughts I send you Margaret's and my best wishes for strength in bearing your huge responsibilities and for the success of your current visit to the Far East.