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1.4(c); (b)(3)

**Theo WAIGEL**  
(Phonetic: VYEghel)

**FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY**

*Minister of Finance (since April 1989)*

(b)(3)

Theo Waigel has been chairman of the conservative Christian Social Union (CSU)—the Bavarian sister party of the governing Christian Democratic Union (CDU)—since November 1988. His move to the Cabinet is an attempt by the CDU to woo conservative voters; opinion polls show that these voters believe that their concerns are ignored in Bonn—in recent local elections, many of them shunned the CDU in favor of far-rightist parties. Joining the Cabinet is a risky move for Waigel. By binding his fortunes and those of the CSU closer to the government, he has earned at least short-term political points as a responsible statesman doing his part to shore up the beleaguered coalition. In the longer term, however, if the CDU and the CSU fail to persuade conservatives that Bonn is on their side, not only could the coalition lose the federal election scheduled for late 1990, but Waigel's position within the CSU could be threatened as well.

(b)(3)

**Economic Views**

Until his appointment as CSU chairman, Waigel rarely spoke out on economic issues, leaving that role to other party leaders. Nevertheless, he is well versed and should hit the ground running.

1.4(c); 1.4(d)

(b)(3)

Waigel was the CSU Bundestag group's point man on budget and finance questions during 1980-84 and then was the coalition's spokesman on the Budget Committee. He credits the government's economic policies with creating a seven-year, self-supporting economic upswing and is unlikely to alter the basic structure of FRG economic policy. He will, however, portray himself as responsive to the social concerns of the average voter, and he will work to modify unpopular tax policies. He has already begun to make his mark: as a quid pro quo for accepting a Cabinet post, he insisted on the repeal of the controversial 10-percent withholding tax on interest income that went into effect in January.

(b)(3)

Waigel supports a market economy and a strong social welfare net; he supports the government's role in ensuring a balanced relationship between all segments of the economy. Although he theoretically rejects state subsidies, he accepts that they are a political necessity. Waigel would like to assert more control over mergers by reenacting antitrust laws that take into account buyers' market monopolies. He agrees with the business community that corporate tax reform is urgently needed to entice firms to locate in the FRG, especially with the creation of the single European market in 1992. Waigel has actively supported the EC, which he sees as a large market free of trade barriers, protectionist intervention, and, to a large extent, fluctuating currency exchange rates. He says that the integrated market will give West Germany the economies of scale needed to compete with the United States and Japan.

(b)(3)

**Foreign Policy Views**

With the death of Franz Josef Strauss in 1988, Waigel has become the CSU's principal foreign policy expert, and he has continued the party's strong commitment to NATO and

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good relations with Washington. <sup>1.4(c)</sup>

although he does not support the banning of NATO low-level flight training, he has responded to public outrage by calling for a decrease in the number of flights, dispersal of planes to other locations, and the increasing use of simulators. <sup>(b)(3)</sup>

Concerned that the FRG may be giving the impression that it does not fully support NATO policies, Waigel has stressed that West Germany remains a reliable member of the Alliance. An outspoken critic of the INF Treaty, he has argued that the agreement left West Germany vulnerable to Soviet superiority in conventional and tactical forces. Waigel has urged progress in conventional arms negotiations and has pushed to get short-range nuclear forces (SNF) included in arms control discussions. He has said, however, that a third zero in SNF must be prevented. Waigel, who personally backs SNF modernization, has expressed only perfunctory support for Bonn's position that a decision on modernization should be delayed until 1992. He is opposed to endangering Western interests through unilateral force cuts in response to Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's announced plans to reduce Warsaw Pact forces. Like most Bavarians, Waigel is extremely wary about overestimating the long-term effect of Gorbachev's reforms and says that Moscow's goal is still to neutralize Europe and decouple it from the United States. Nonetheless, he recognizes the favorable opinion of Gorbachev held throughout the FRG and says that the CSU will do everything it can to improve relations with Moscow. <sup>(b)(3)</sup>

### Political Base

Waigel was unanimously chosen to succeed Strauss as CSU chairman. The leadership transition was smooth, but he shares power with Bavaria's Minister-President Max Streibl and Finance Minister Gerold Tandler; he is still consolidating his position on the Bavarian home front. His principal challenge as party leader has been to persuade CSU hardliners in Munich that he is pushing Bavarian interests in Bonn. As Strauss's direct successor, Waigel has born the brunt of glaring comparisons to the "uncrowned king of Bavaria." <sup>1.4(c)</sup>

Moreover, as CSU chairman, he must contend with the rising popularity in Bavaria of the rightwing Republikaner Party. Should he stumble in Bonn, his CSU critics and his far-rightist rivals would not hesitate to squeeze him out. <sup>(b)(3)</sup>

### Career and Personal Data

Waigel was born on 22 April 1939. He holds a doctorate in law. During 1966-72 he was a member of the Krumbach district parliament, worked at the Munich district court, and was personal adviser to two Bavarian state ministers. He served as chairman of the Junge Union (youth group) in Bavaria during 1971-75. He was first elected to the Bundestag in 1972. Since 1973 he has been chairman of the CSU's basic policy commission. He was chairman of the CSU group in the Bundestag from 1982 until April 1989. Waigel speaks some English. His hobbies include hiking, soccer, and attending the theater. He also enjoys books on history, philosophy, and theology. <sup>1.4(c)</sup>

Married, he has two children. <sup>(b)(3)</sup>

10 May 1989

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