



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London S.W.1

18 December 1979

Herr Ruete

Paul

Dear Caroline,

Farewell Call by the FRG Ambassador

The Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany, Herr Hans Hellmuth Ruete, is to pay a farewell call on the Prime Minister on Thursday 20 December. I attach a personality note on Herr Ruete. This is his last post, and he is retiring to his home near Bonn.

We have not thought it necessary to provide a separate brief for the Prime Minister; the farewell call will be extremely short and there are no particular points we wish to recommend the Prime Minister to make. The Prime Minister is conscious of the closeness of relations between the UK and the FRG, maintained by the regular series of consultations at Head of Government level. The next meeting is due at the end of March, immediately before the 1980 Königswinter Conference in Cambridge which both the Prime Minister and Chancellor Schmidt plan to attend.

Herr Ruete completes his mission in London on 31 December. He is a quiet unassuming man - a marked contrast with his more flamboyant predecessor, Herr von Hase. He has also appeared latterly to be in poor health (he lost a leg in the war). But he has a shrewd brain and has acquired a wide circle of friends, especially in Parliament. His successor is Dr Jürgen Ruhfus, at present principal foreign policy adviser in the office of Chancellor Schmidt. Dr Ruhfus is young (49) and immensely hard-working; we are fortunate in having as the future FRG Ambassador in London an official in whom the Chancellor has such complete confidence.

Yours ever

Paul

(P Lever)
Private Secretary

Miss Caroline Stephens
10 Downing Street

CONFIDENTIAL

HE HERR HANS-HELLMUTH RUETE GCVO

Federal German Ambassador to London since 22 April 1977

1. Herr Ruete was born in 1914 in St Petersburg and studied law at the Universities of Kiel, Marburg, Lausanne and Tokyo. He did Doctoral work on the Extra-territorial rights of the European powers in China and Japan. During the war he served in North Africa and the Soviet Union. He completed his studies after the war and joined the Federal Ministry of Justice in 1950. .
2. In 1952 he transferred to the Foreign Ministry and served successively as Counsellor in Tokyo (1952-56); Head of the Soviet Department in the Foreign Ministry (1956-60); Harvard Center for International Affairs (1960-61); Consul-General Calcutta (1961-64). From 1964-66 he was Assistant Under Secretary in charge of East/West relations. From 1966-70 he was Deputy Under Secretary and Head of the Second Political Department at the Foreign Ministry. From 1970-72 Herr Ruete was Federal German Ambassador in Paris, and from 1972-77 Ambassador in Warsaw. He has reached retirement age (65) this year. His appointment in London ends on 31 December 1979, and his successor Herr Ruhfus, at present in the Chancellor's Office, arrives in the New Year.
3. Herr Ruete is married with three children. He speaks good English as well as French, Russian and Japanese, and is reported to have English ancestors. His interests are listed as music, literature and theatre. His wife Ruth speaks French and English.
4. Herr Ruete has a wooden leg, and looks more than his age. He has the manner - and the wisdom - of an old-fashioned family doctor. He and his wife did not find it altogether easy to follow in the footsteps of their dynamic and publicity-conscious predecessors, the von Hases. But he has an obvious affection and admiration for Britain and warms up in response to friendliness.

18 DEC 1979





10 DOWNING STREET

Mr. Alexander.

Gene Ambrose.

17.15 No 10

Thursday 20 December

Copy requested
by 19/12.

C.S.

17/12.



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

①

Mrs Stephens

14 December 1979

Am

Prime Minister

yes not

Dear Michael,

Apex (because of Lord Carrington's views)?

Proposed Farewell Call by the FRG Ambassador

Am

As I mentioned to you on the telephone, the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany have asked us if their Ambassador, Herr Hans-Hellmuth Ruete, could pay a farewell call on the Prime Minister before his mission in London ends on 31 December.

Lord Carrington accepts that only in a very few cases is there justification for the Prime Minister receiving departing Ambassadors. The importance to the UK of the Federal Republic of Germany suggests that the FRG Ambassador is one of these few. Lord Carrington would therefore see advantage, if time could be made available, in the Prime Minister receiving Herr Ruete for a very brief farewell call.

Yours etc

Paul

(P Lever)
Private Secretary

M O'D B Alexander Esq
10 Downing Street

14 DEC 1979



1. BGL } O.R. Hw
2. CAW } 27/11



MAF 27/11

Mr Cartledge

With the compliments of

SIR MICHAEL PALLISER

's office

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE, SW1

27/6/1979

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

Germany

Ruhfus is an outstanding official of the
post-war German type.

22/6

BRITISH EMBASSY,

BOON.

19 June 1979

Sir Michael Palliser GCMG
FCO

This, if it happens, will be
an enormous improvement.
cc with my copy to:
Sir J. Hunt
Mr. Carlidge (no. 1)

Dear Michael,

1. In case you have not already felt them, the vibes we are getting in Bonn suggest that Jürgen Ruhfus, at present Deputy Under Secretary - equivalent in the Chancellor's Office, is to replace Ruete as next Federal German Ambassador in London. This is not yet, I fancy, official, and both the sources who have told us (not Ruhfus himself) have sworn us to silence. I hope their confidence will be respected, not least since neither I, nor I am sure you, would wish anything to come between the intention and its execution.

2. I imagine that Jürgen Ruhfus is well enough known in London, at No 10, and the Ministry of Defence as well as at the FCO, not to require any introduction by me. Needless to say it is an excellent choice. His last post overseas was Ambassador in Kenya so he ought to add an understanding of our curious Commonwealth to his many other qualifications. That he should be coming to us from the Chancellor's Office is itself a mark of the high regard in which he (and perhaps we) are held. As you know, he and his delightful and cheerful wife are excellent company and will go down very well in London. They clearly follow the von Herwarth and von Hase tradition and not any other. He is 49.

Yours very truly

Oliver Wright

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