



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

23 April 1980

Dear Michael,

K. S. [Signature]

CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT'S VISIT TO MOSCOW

[You have seen this already] At the same time as we were receiving your letter of 17 April, we had thought it advisable to instruct the Embassy in Bonn to put down a preliminary marker with the Chancellor's office about the need for close consultation about the Chancellor's visit. You will have seen Bonn telegram number 342 in reply (copy attached for ease of reference), which makes it clear that the Chancellor has not yet finally made up his mind but is very much inclined to go to Moscow sooner or later. The Germans have not, however, made any approach to us yet to seek our views.

You will also have seen Bonn telegram number 343 (copy also attached) in which the Embassy argue that it would be a mistake for HMG to adopt too negative an attitude to Herr Schmidt's accepting the invitation. Lord Carrington accepts the Embassy's view on this, for the reasons set out in paragraph 7 of the second telegram under reference. From Washington telegram number 1563 (enclosed) it would appear that the Americans have similarly come to the conclusion that it will be impossible to dissuade Herr Schmidt from making the visit and that the important thing is for the FRG's allies to make sure that he speaks on the basis of a unified allied approach.

As for timing, we do not yet know what the Chancellor has in mind, but if he is to represent the Allies jointly in some way it would clearly make sense for his visit not to take place until after the various meetings planned for June (European Council, Venice Summit and NATO Foreign Ministers Meeting in Ankara). This would give time for the more important issues for his briefing to be properly co-ordinated beforehand. And if Gromyko goes to Vienna for the Austrian State Treaty celebrations, and there are meetings between him and other Western Foreign Ministers (Vance, Genscher, Francois-Poncet and the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary are also likely to be there) the case for an early visit by Herr Schmidt to Moscow looks less strong.

[D.] As requested, I attach a draft telegram to Bonn containing a message for transmission to Chancellor Schmidt about the Prime Minister's desire for a private word with him about the visit in the margins of the European Council meeting.

I am copying this letter to David Wright (Cabinet Office).

*See over
89-22*

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(G G H Walden)
Private Secretary