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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

26 April 1983

Dear John,

Visit of Governing Mayor of Berlin

The Prime Minister has invited Dr Richard von Weizsaecker, Governing Mayor of Berlin, to call at 10 a.m. on 27 April. Dr von Weizsaecker is speaking this evening, 26 April, in the Oxford Union on 'The German Question and Berlin'. (He read philosophy and history at Balliol in 1937.) The Prime Minister will remember that she was unable to see him during his first official visit to London on 1-2 April 1982. The Governing Mayor has often recalled with pleasure and gratitude the Prime Minister's visit to Berlin on 29 October 1982.

Dr von Weizsaecker has been Governing Mayor of Berlin for almost two years. Externally the city remains quiet. The Russians appear to want continuing calm. There was a serious incident on 2 April when the Russians unilaterally closed the centre air corridor for 25 minutes. The Allies have protested about this to the Russians in Berlin and are doing so today in capitals. The indications are, however, that the Russian decision to close the corridor was a military one taken without full political consultation.

Internally the Governing Mayor seems to have made some progress in tackling Berlin's social problems. But the city's economic difficulties remain formidable. Although Dr von Weizsaecker succeeded in securing a conference of industrialists under Chancellor Kohl's patronage in Berlin in December 1982, there is still a question mark over whether Bonn is prepared to make the much greater commitment needed to ensure the regeneration of the city.

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The Governing Mayor will be interested in the Prime Minister's current assessment of East/West relations. We are still waiting to see how the new CDU government will handle inner German relations. The CSU are likely to press for the Government to be much tougher in negotiating humanitarian concessions by the GDR (notably a lowering of the hard currency Minimum Exchange Requirement). Their position has been strengthened by the death on 10 April of a West German (Rudolf Burkert) under East German interrogation. Unless the GDR can produce a convincing explanation or apology for the incident, it may become difficult for Kohl to keep open his invitation to Honecker to visit the FRG this year.

The Governing Mayor believes Berlin merits a more active role in the formulation and implementation of inner-German policy. He will want to see the Kohl Government adopt a coherent and determined stance towards the GDR. But he will also oppose any policies Bonn might adopt towards the GDR which he would regard as damaging to Berlin's interests.

On arms control and INF, Dr von Weizsaecker is a staunch advocate of the Atlantic Alliance and the US commitment to European defence. But he believes in the need for a Western approach that combines defence readiness with deterrence. He was highly critical of Vogel's attempt to make INF an issue in the Federal election. (He was absent from Berlin when Mr Heseltine visited on 31 March.)

Other subjects that the Governing Mayor may raise are:

- (a) Britain's economic prospects and the problem of unemployment;
- (b) the development of the EC and the pressures on the Federal Chancellor during the German Presidency. He regards the issue of Political Co-operation, including security aspects, as more pressing than decisions on voting principles. The Prime Minister might take the line that the UK would be prepared to look at ideas for increased security co-operation (though others have difficulty with the idea) provided, of course, that we are careful to maintain the US commitment to the defence of Europe and the central role of NATO in this field;

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- (c) the US Government's position on Turkey versus Greece in NATO. The Governing Mayor has a large Turkish community in Berlin and has recently visited Turkey. He is concerned about the strength of the Greek lobby in Washington in relation to the current dispute over the ratio of US military aid to Greece and Turkey.

The Governing Mayor will be accompanied by an Assistant Private Secretary, Herr Pflueger. The Germans know the Prime Minister would like the meeting to be tete-a-tete.

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AN $\frac{26}{4}$.

John over
Brian

(B J P Fall)
Private Secretary

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

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Dear Sir,

Visit of Governing Mayor of Berlin

We discussed on the telephone Dr von Weizsaecker's visit to the UK, primarily to speak at the Oxford Union, on 26/27 April. We put the Prime Minister's invitation to call at 10 am on 27 April to him in the terms the Prime Minister asked and have now heard that he will be delighted to accept.

We shall in due course provide a short background brief for the Prime Minister's use.

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(R B Bone)
Private Secretary

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10 Downing Street

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