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PRIME MINISTER

MEETING WITH THE GERMAN AMBASSADOR

You are to receive the German Ambassador for a brief farewell call tomorrow. As you know, he is leaving the German diplomatic service and going into politics as a candidate for Genscher's party in the forthcoming elections in the European Parliament.

Points which you may like to make are:

- thank him for his work in London, where he has been some five years. It has been a good time for Anglo-German relations and he deserves great credit for that;
- recall what was perhaps the highlight, the visit by President von Weizsaecker;
- confirm that you see a close Anglo-German understanding as of crucial importance for Europe and indeed the West as a whole. You put great value on your regular meetings with Chancellor Kohl;
- you look forward to seeing Chancellor Kohl in Rhodes. You would like to hear first hand about his visits to Moscow and Washington, which will be important in preparing for your own meeting with President Gorbachev;
- you particularly welcome Kohl's statement in Washington that the so-called comprehensive concept for arms control must be ready for adoption by the middle of next year so that necessary decisions on SNF modernisation can be taken then.

He will not be aware of the plan to send Dr. Leutwiler to South Africa as a special emissary of Chancellor Kohl. You should not mention it.

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You will not want to keep him more than 20 minute as you have
President Vassiliou immediately afterwards.

C.D.T

(C. D. POWELL)

24 November 1988

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

24 November 1988

Dear Charles,

Call by FRG Ambassador

The Federal German Ambassador, Baron von Wechmar, is to pay a farewell call on the Prime Minister on 25 November. I enclose a personality note. On leaving London, von Wechmar will retire from the German Diplomatic Service and enter politics. He is to lead the FDP list in the elections to the European Parliament next June. We understand that he was Herr Genscher's personal choice. At the last such elections the FDP failed to clear the 5% hurdle and so at present have no Members of the European Parliament. Their current showing in the opinion polls suggests that they will do better this time. The Prime Minister could ask von Wechmar how he views the prospects and how the FDP is faring after the election of Lambsdorff to the post of Secretary-General.

During his five years in London, von Wechmar has tended not to get too closely involved in day-to-day business between the two Governments but to concentrate on building up wider political, commercial and cultural contacts. He has travelled extensively in the United Kingdom. Among the high spots in Anglo-German relations while he has been here have been the State Visit by President von Weizsacker in July 1986 and the visit to Germany last autumn by the Prince and Princess of Wales, in which von Wechmar took part.

Major issues of substance have been the reform of Community financing and the drive to 1992, the INF negotiations and the new East/West situation. Earlier this year von Wechmar tended to share in a rather uncritical way the prevailing concern about Anglo-German differences on some of these issues. It would be helpful for the Prime Minister to confirm that she sees close Anglo-German understanding as of crucial importance for the Alliance and much values her regular discussions with Chancellor Kohl.

This could be put in the context of looking forward to the bilateral meeting with Chancellor Kohl just before the Rhodes European Council. Neither we nor the Germans at official level believe that it will be necessary to devote much time at that meeting to European Community issues.

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It will, however, be a valuable opportunity, after the Prime Minister's and Kohl's visits to Washington and Kohl's visits to Moscow and before Gorbachev's visit here, to discuss priorities for the Alliance over the coming months. Although we do not recommend that the Prime Minister go into detail with von Wechmar, she could take the opportunity to welcome Chancellor Kohl's public comments in Washington that NATO's comprehensive concept, (which the Germans and others have argued must provide the rationale for SNF modernisation decisions) should be ready for adoption by the middle of 1989; and that SNF modernisation should be clarified in the framework of this concept.

We doubt if von Wechmar will raise South Africa. We must assume that he is not aware of your contacts with the Chancellery on this.

Yours etc,

L. Parker

(L Parker)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
PS/No 10 Downing Street

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VON WECHMAR, BARON RÜDIGER

FRG Ambassador in London.

Born 1923 in Berlin. War service. POW in the US. Journalist, 1946-58, ending up as chief of UP's Bonn Bureau. Press Attache at FRG Consulate-General, New York, 1958-63. Head of the Vienna Buro of ZDF (Second German Television), 1963-68, then briefly Head of German Information Centre in New York, 1969. Returned to Bonn to become first deputy and, in 1970, Chief Government spokesman, a post which he held until 1974, where he was appointed Ambassador and Permanent Representative at the FRG Mission to the United Nations in New York. He remained in New York until 1981; he was President of the Security Council (1978-79) and President of the General Assembly (1980-81). Ambassador in Rome, 1981-83. Appointed to London in November 1983.

A big, bluff, likeable man who is widely respected in Germany as one of the country's most eminent diplomats. Clearly has Genscher's ear. His appointment as President of the General Assembly was widely acclaimed by the German Press as marking the FRG's emergence as a power with world-wide interests. He obviously enjoyed his time in New York, retains a house on Long Island, and returns fairly frequently on UN business in which he is still occasionally engaged.

During his tenure of the Presidency of the General Assembly his handling of the "global negotiations" caused the Western caucus numerous problems. This did not, however, detract from his reputation in the FRG and the end of his tenure of the Presidency was marked by the highly unusual step of a telegram of congratulations from the Federal President, the main thrust of which was that his performance had done great credit to the FRG.

Married with three children. Fluent American-English.

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Charles

11045

Friday

25th

Nov.



T.G.

10 DOWNING STREET

1255a

Charles

Can we split.

The German Ambassador

is leaving end November and
would like to bid farewell
to the P.M. during November,
preferably 25/11/88.

Do you wish to pursue / decline?

Duf Clerk: To advise

Victoria Von Ziemerann

235 5033 EXT 303

RTS

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