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From the Private Secretary

Meeting recalled: Subject cc memo

PRIME MINISTER'S TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH CHANCELLOR KOHL

Chancellor Kohl telephoned the Prime Minister this afternoon and they had a talk lasting some 20 minutes, covering South Africa and East/West relations.

South Africa

Chancellor Kohl recalled that he and the Prime Minister had discussed South Africa when they had met at Chequers. Since then he had met both President Botha and Pik Botha in Munich at the time of Strauss's funeral. His impression was that President Botha's position was, if anything, more rigid than ever. President Botha had asked whether it might be possible to have a joint meeting with Chancellor Kohl and the Prime Minister. Chancellor Kohl said that he had refrained from saying either yes or no, remarking only that it would require careful consideration. Something concrete would have to come out of such a meeting. He and the Prime Minister might discuss this possibility further when they met in Rhodes for the European Council. He had detected some slight shift in President Botha's position on Mandela's release, but was still not convinced that he was ready to take this step. President Botha had asked whether sanctions would be lifted if the South Africa Government released Mandela. Kohl had replied that this was most unlikely. There were rumours that President Botha might not remain in office which would be a help.

Chancellor Kohl continued that we must expect the pressure for sanctions to increase after the Presidential elections in the US. Whoever won, there was likely to be a Democratic majority in Congress. He himself would remain firm in his opposition to sanctions. They made no sense. All these factors led him to believe that he and the Prime Minister should pursue the idea they had discussed at Chequers of sending a joint emissary to South Africa. He had therefore made contact with Leutwiler, who was ready to go. He proposed, therefore, that Messrs. Powell and Teltschik should have an early meeting to finalise a joint speaking note which could be given to Leutwiler. If Leutwiler went to South

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Africa before the European Council meeting in early December, then he and the Prime Minister could assess the results when they met there.

The Prime Minister said that she had not realised that Chancellor Kohl had met President Botha. She was pleased that he had done so and had spoken in terms which she could readily endorse. President Botha was taking a number of new steps, particularly in relations with other African Governments. There were some interesting developments on the sports side. But none of this was any substitute for a real move forward internally within South Africa. The priority must be the release of Mandela. She agreed that this would certainly not lead to sanctions being automatically lifted. But it would be possible to present it as evidence that progress was being made and that no new sanctions should be imposed. She agreed that Messrs. Powell and Teltschik should meet as soon as possible to finalise a speaking note. We had in fact sent the German side a draft which she hoped the Chancellor would look at. Once this was agreed the way would be open for Leutwiler to go to South Africa. Chancellor Kohl said that Herr Teltschik might come over to London the week after next so that he could also give Mr. Powell an account of the visit to Moscow. Indeed, the Prime Minister herself might like to spare a few minutes to see Herr Teltschik. The Prime Minister said she would be very ready to do so if her diary permitted. It might also be useful if she slipped over to Germany one weekend to see Chancellor Kohl privately for a fuller discussion. Chancellor Kohl said that he would welcome this.

East/West Relations

Chancellor Kohl continued that he and the Prime Minister must stay in very close contact following his visit to Moscow. He saw both opportunities and risks in the present situation. If Gorbachev was really set on an open policy, he would be ready to meet him halfway. But many people were inclined to mistake words for deeds. In reality it was only deeds which counted.

The Prime Minister said she very much agreed, and this applied above all to holding a human rights conference in Moscow. She was worried that all the people that had fought so nobly in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe for basic human rights and liberty would feel let down if the West was bamboozled into attending such a conference. There was still a long way to go before there would be anything resembling liberty in the Soviet Union. Chancellor Kohl said that a conference might be useful if it produced binding commitments. The Prime Minister said that we should not agree even to go until some very strict criteria had been satisfied. Chancellor Kohl said this was exactly what he had in mind (I am not sure that it was). Improvements were needed in many areas although he was not sure how far Gorbachev was able to go. The Prime Minister said there would need to be not just clear undertakings but also actions. Chancellor Kohl pronounced that he and the Prime Minister saw eye to eye. He would take the line that the West would seriously study the

Soviet proposal provided it was clear there would be specific practical improvements. The Prime Minister said that she looked forward very much to hearing how Chancellor Kohl got on.

I have subsequently spoken to Teltschik and agreed in principle that he will come over on Monday 7 November. He will try to let me have comments on our draft speaking note before then. He did not expect to have to propose many changes (I wonder). He added that the Chancellor was alarmed at some of the British press reporting of his speech in Brussels. We should read the full text: it was not intended in any way as an attack on the Prime Minister. I said the Prime Minister had not been at all concerned.

(C. D. POWELL)

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