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FM WASHINGTON
TO DESKBY 021800Z FCO
TELNO 276
OF 021700Z FEBRUARY 90
AND TO IMMEDIATE CABINET OFFICE
AND TO IMMEDIATE BONN, UKDEL NATO, PARIS, MOSCOW

*The essential thing is
to agree with
Corkin / Shevardnadze. Then
we can try to persuade Germany.
pnt*

PERSONAL FOR AMBASSADORS, CABINET OFFICE FOR POWELL, NO. 10
BILATERAL DISCUSSION OF GERMAN ISSUES

SUMMARY

1. THE CLEAR US MESSAGE IS THAT SPEED IS ESSENTIAL IF WE ARE TO AVOID A FREE FALL TO GERMAN UNITY. I RECOMMEND AN EARLY PRESENTATION TO THE AMERICANS OF POSSIBLE PRACTICAL STEPS TO STABILISE TRANSITION, INCLUDING: ENDORSEMENT OF THE (FORMER) GDR AS A DEMILITARISED ZONE WHILE THE (FORMER) FRG WOULD REMAIN IN NATO: QUADRIPARTITE DISCUSSION OF HOW TO GIVE NATO MORE POLITICAL CONTENT: EXPLOITATION OF THE BERLIN FOUR MECHANISM: AND CONSIDERATION OF HOW EVENTUALLY TO INTEGRATE THE (FORMER) GDR INTO THE COMMUNITY. WE NEED TO ADDRESS THE QUESTIONS OF WHICH GERMANS TO TALK TO, WHAT WE SHOULD TELL THE AMERICANS OF OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH THE FRENCH, THE FUTURE OF THE QUADRIPARTITE MECHANISM IN THIS CONTEXT, AND HOW TO BRING IN OTHER NATO PARTNERS.

DETAIL

2. YOU WILL BY NOW HAVE HAD TIME TO REFLECT ON THE RESTRICTED TALKS THE PUS HELD HERE ON 29 JANUARY. AT THE RISK OF COVERING WELL-TRODDEN GROUND, IT MIGHT BE USEFUL TO SET OUT SOME OF THE PARAMETERS, AS SEEN FROM WASHINGTON, FOR THE NEXT STEP IN OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH THE AMERICANS.

3. TWO CLEAR MESSAGES CAME OVER ON 29 JANUARY - THAT THE AMERICANS BELIEVE EVENTS WILL MOVE EVEN FASTER THAN WE HAVE SO FAR EXPECTED, AND TOWARDS GERMAN UNIFICATION: AND, SECONDLY, THAT WE NEED TO GET A GRIP NOW IF WE ARE TO EXERT AN INFLUENCE. I BELIEVE THIS US SENSE OF URGENCY TO HAVE BEEN HEIGHTENED BECAUSE THE EAST GERMAN ELECTIONS HAVE BEEN BROUGHT FORWARD TO 18 MARCH, BECAUSE GENSCHER IS ALREADY ARGUING THAT THE OUTCOME OF THIS ALONE WOULD BE THE TRIGGER FOR THE TWO STATES TO TAKE DECISIONS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THEM, AND ALSO BECAUSE THE FUTURE OF GERMANY WILL BE ONE OF THE SUBJECTS TO BE LOOKED AT BY BAKER WHEN HE GOES TO MOSCOW ON 8 FEBRUARY. THIS MEETING WILL FORM AN ESSENTIAL INTRODUCTION TO THE OTTAWA OPEN SKIES MEETING AT WHICH THE AMERICANS HOPE A NUMBER OF WIDER ISSUES WILL BE CONSIDERED. MUCH OF THE WIDER CHANGE IS CONTINGENT ON WHAT HAPPENS NEXT IN GERMANY.

4. THE AMERICANS STILL FEEL IN NO BETTER CONTACT THAN US WITH THE GERMANS ON THE THREE MAJOR ISSUES WHICH ARISE FROM THE POSSIBILITY OF GERMAN UNIFICATION: A UNITED GERMANY'S RELATIONSHIP WITH NATO, WITH THE WAR-TIME ALLIES, AND WITH THE COMMUNITY. THESE PARTICULAR ISSUES, WHICH WE NEED TO ADDRESS IN OUR BILATERAL TALKS, ARE ALSO CENTRAL TO THE WIDER AGENDA: PRESERVING ACCEPTANCE OF THE NATO MILITARY STRUCTURE AND ADEQUATE FORCE LEVELS IN A CHANGING EAST/WEST SITUATION, GIVING FRESH POLITICAL CONTENT TO THE ALLIANCE, THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE EC AND THE RELATIVE WEIGHT FOR THE FUTURE OF THE CSCE PROCESS. THE LATTER ISSUES WILL NEED TO BE DISCUSSED WITH A WIDER RANGE OF AMERICANS AND EUROPEANS THAN ARE PRIVY TO UK/US EXCHANGES ON GERMANY. THEY TOO ARE SUBJECT TO PERHAPS INCREASING TIME CONSTRAINTS. THE DIFFICULTY IN CONTROLLING THIS MIX SEEMS ALL THE GREATER, VIEWED FROM WASHINGTON, BECAUSE THE DOMESTIC AND INTRA-GERMAN AGENDA IS PREDOMINANT FOR BONN IN AN ELECTORAL YEAR, RAISING THE FEAR THAT THE GERMANS WILL NOT SEE THE PROBLEMS OF A FREE FALL TOWARDS UNITY AND COULD THEREBY COMPROMISE THE WIDER EAST/WEST AGENDA. THE AMERICANS BELIEVE THAT UNLESS THEY ARE ABLE TO SEIZE THE INITIATIVE, THEY RISK BECOMING BY-STANDERS IN A POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS SITUATION. THE OBVIOUS WAY FOR THEM TO GET A BETTER LEVER ON THE GERMANS IS TO PERSUADE THE LATTER THAT THEY WANT ACTIVELY TO HELP MANAGE THE TRANSITION TO A UNITED GERMANY IN THE COMMON INTEREST.

5. I AM UNCERTAIN AS TO WHETHER WE SEE MATTERS IN QUITE SO URGENT A LIGHT AS THE PRESIDENT'S ADVISERS. IF WE DO NOT ACCEPT THE ANALYSIS PRESENTED BY ZOELLICK AND BLACKWILL ON 29 JANUARY, WE SHOULD OF COURSE MAKE THAT CLEAR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. BUT ASSUMING OUR IDEAS ARE NOT TOO FAR APART, I RECOMMEND VERY EARLY ACTION WITH ZOELLICK, I THINK IT MOST DESIRABLE TO GET SOME THOUGHTS ON BEFORE BAKER'S TALKS IN MOSCOW. WE ARE NOW IN APPARENT GENERAL AGREEMENT WITH THE AMERICANS ON THE TERMS ON WHICH UNITY SHOULD BE ACHIEVED, THOUGH OUR VIEWS OF THE TIMESCALE MAY BE DIFFERENT. IF WE DO NOT ACT SOON, WE MAY BE OVERTAKEN BY EVENTS.

6. A PRESENTATION BY US TO THE AMERICANS MIGHT INCLUDE:

(A) THE MOST OBVIOUS WAY FOR US NOW TO ENSURE CONTINUED EFFECTIVE WEST GERMAN MEMBERSHIP OF NATO WOULD BE TO ACCEPT THAT THE TERRITORY OF THE GDR WOULD, IN A UNITED GERMANY, BE KEPT FREE OF NON-GERMAN NATO FORCES. REFERENCE TO A DEMARCATION ON THE BASIS OF LENDER MIGHT PRESUMABLY HELP. TWO ALLIANCES IN ONE COUNTRY CANNOT BE THE LONGER TERM ANSWER. THE GERMANS THEMSELVES WOULD PRESUMABLY HAVE TO RETAIN THE RIGHT TO STATION SOME OF THEIR OWN FORCES IN THE AREA, IF ONLY FOR THE PURPOSES OF MAINTAINING LAW AND ORDER. ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT WE COULD AGREE SOME SUCH APPROACH WITH THE AMERICANS, AND THEN THE FRENCH, THERE WOULD BE ADVANTAGE IN TALKING TO THE GERMANS BEFORE AGREEING THE DETAILS ON AN ALLIANCE BASIS. IT WOULD BE FOR CONSIDERATION WHETHER OR NOT WE SHOULD SUGGEST THAT THE BAKER/SHEVARDNADZE SESSION IN MOSCOW BE USED TO SOUND OUT THE RUSSIANS IN ADVANCE. A TRANSITION PERIOD FOR SOVIET TROOPS TO REMAIN IN THE GDR COULD BE BUILT INTO THIS SORT OF FRAMEWORK, THE MORE EASILY BECAUSE THE PREVAILING ASSUMPTION IS THAT THE RUSSIANS WILL HAVE TO LEAVE SOME TIME IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE ANYWAY. IF WE WERE ABLE TO AGREE SUCH AN APPROACH WITH THE GERMANS, AND TO MAKE IT CLEAR PUBLICLY WHAT WE HAD DONE, THAT WOULD PRESUMABLY HELP PERSUADE GERMAN PUBLIC OPINION THAT THE WESTERN ALLIES WERE ON THEIR SIDE.

*What
are their
ideas?*

(B) ASSUMING WE WERE ABLE TO AGREE ON THIS BASIC APPROACH WITH THE GERMANS - AND WHAT THEY THEMSELVES HAVE SAID LENDS CREDENCE TO THAT BELIEF - THE QUAD MIGHT THEN USEFULLY DISCUSS WHAT FLESH TO PUT ON THE BONES OF THE PROPOSAL THAT THE ALLIANCE SHOULD TAKE ON MORE POLITICAL CONTENT. THERE IS PLENTY OF AMBIGUITY TO BE RESOLVED HERE OVER THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THIS IDEA AND THE FUTURE OF CSCE (TO WHICH THE GERMANS SEEM TO ATTACH PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE) AS WELL AS THE EC. WE SHALL ALSO NEED TO AGREE WITH THE AMERICANS, AS WELL AS WITH OUR OTHER ALLIES, ON A MILITARY JUSTIFICATION FOR NATO IN THE CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES OF A UNITING GERMANY AND, PRESUMABLY, A MORE DEMOCRATIC EASTERN EUROPE. THIS COMPLEX OF QUESTIONS NEED NOT BE HANDLED ON THE RESTRICTED BILATERAL NET SUGGESTED ON 29 JANUARY, BUT THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR POLICIES WOULD HAVE TO BE TIED IN TO THAT CONTEXT.

(C) WE MIGHT TRY TO AGREE WITH THE AMERICANS ON HOW TO DISCUSS WITH THE GERMANS AND THE RUSSIANS HOW BEST TO FIT IN A UNIFICATION PROCESS WITH THE INTERESTS AND RIGHTS OF THE FOUR BERLIN POWERS. THE GERMANS WOULD HAVE TO BE BROUGHT TO SEE THIS FOUR POWER MECHANISM AS HELPFUL IN ASSURING THE SAFE BIRTH OF A NEW GERMANY AND AS A MEANS OF GETTING THE RUSSIANS ON BOARD. WE HAVE HAD INDICATIONS THAT THE AMERICANS MIGHT BE TEMPTED TO TALK TO SHEVARDNADZE ON 8 FEBRUARY ABOUT THE POSSIBILITIES OF A FOUR PLUS TWO MECHANISM. IT WOULD SEEM PRUDENT TO MAKE SURE THAT BERLIN ISSUES, LIKE DIRECT ELECTIONS, WHICH WOULD FALL NATURALLY INTO PLACE FOLLOWING A GENERAL SETTLEMENT, DID NOT GET OUT IN FRONT OF THE WIDER PROCESS. NOR SHOULD IT BE COMPLICATED WITH SOVIET DEMANDS FOR A PEACE CONFERENCE.

(D) WE, ALONE OR IN CONJUNCTION WITH OTHERS, WILL NEED, PERHAPS AFTER DISCUSSION WITH THE GERMANS OF THE ABOVE THREE POINTS, TO EXPLORE WITH THE GERMANS THE QUESTION OF HOW BEST TO INTEGRATE THE FORMER GDR TERRITORIES INTO THE COMMUNITY FRAMEWORK, ONCE UNIFICATION HAS BEEN ENDORSED BY THE ELECTORATE. A BRITISH INITIATIVE HERE COULD PERHAPS PROVE USEFUL IN BONN, THOUGH WE SHOULD PRESUMABLY WISH TO SOUND OUT THE GERMANS INFORMALLY BEFORE ACTING IN BRUSSELS. IT WOULD OBVIOUSLY BE ESSENTIAL FOR THE WEST GERMANS TO BE PERSUADED OF THE PRACTICAL NEED FOR TIME FOR ANY SUCH PROCESS. THE MORE WE WERE ABLE TO THINK OVER THE DETAILS OF WHERE AND HOW THE GDR LEADER HAD TO ADJUST, THE MORE CONVINCING AND PRACTICAL OUR PRESENTATION WOULD BE AND THE BETTER PLACED WE SHOULD BE TO COUNTER ANY ASSUMPTION IN GERMAN (OR AMERICAN) MINDS THAT OUR OBJECT WAS TO DELAY THE INEVITABLE RATHER THAN TO HELP ALL OF US ADJUST TO CHANGE.

7. WE SHALL PRESUMABLY NEED TO TALK TO BOTH GENSCHER AND KOHL. GENSCHER IS VISITING WASHINGTON TODAY, 2 FEBRUARY. THE AMERICAN VIEW OF THE BEST CHANNELS TO WORK THROUGH IN BONN MAY PRESUMABLY BE AFFECTED BY THIS VISIT, BUT I BELIEVE THEY WOULD WELCOME ANY ADVICE WE MAY HAVE. WE SHOULD ALSO LET THE AMERICANS KNOW OF OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH THE FRENCH AND PERHAPS CONSIDER AT SOME STAGE TURNING THE PRESENT BILATERAL EXERCISE INTO A THREE CORNERED DISCUSSION. THE QUADRIPARTITE MECHANISM WILL BECOME THE NATURAL ONE TO USE WHEN AND IF WE HAVE MANAGED TO AGREE WITH THE GERMANS ON THE BASIC THRUST OF OUR APPROACH.

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*That would NOT
please the way*