

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~



10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

3 February 1990

Dee Hople. ms

GERMAN UNIFICATION

Mr. Kossov of the Soviet Embassy called on me this morning to hand over the enclosed message to the Prime Minister from Mr. Gorbachev about German unification. It was intended to be a reply to the points in the oral message from the Prime Minister which I had given the Soviet Ambassador earlier this week. It would be helpful to have the Prime Minister's response in due course. It occurred to him that the Prime Minister's meeting with Mr. Medvedev, a senior member of the Politburo, next Wednesday would be a possible occasion, although the main matter for discussion would no doubt be Soviet internal developments.

After reading the message, I said that a number of points about it struck me immediately. First the statement of support for Mr. Modrow's initiative presumably meant that the Soviet Union wanted to see a neutral Germany. That had also been reported as Mr. Shevardnadze's view. Personally I thought this a great mistake, not least from the Soviet Union's own point of view. A Germany free from binding alliances would surely be a more worrying prospect in the longer term than a Germany which was part of NATO and with the continued presence of American troops. He would have noticed Mr. Genscher's recent proposal for de-militarisation of the area of the former GDR in a united Germany. Mr. Kossov said that, in his personal view, the Soviet position would evolve in this direction. But there would first need to be some changes in NATO in the direction of it becoming a more political organisation, with less emphasis on its anti-Soviet military role.

I continued that the second point to strike me was the stress on Four Power discussions on the question of West Berlin. This was a better formulation than the efforts which the Soviet Union had been making until recently to persuade us to have Four Power consultations on Germany as a whole. He knew the practical difficulties with this, and the greater realism of the Soviet position was welcome.

Finally I noted the invitation to Chancellor Kohl to visit Moscow and asked whether he had accepted. Mr. Kossov said that he did not yet know what response there had been from the Germans.

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The Prime Minister will, I think, be ready to discuss these matters with Mr. Medvedev when she sees him on 7 February. She has underlined that the message only increases the urgency of reaching agreement with the Americans on how we should manage the issues raised by German unification, in relation to NATO, to Four Power rights and to CSCE obligations. These matters will no doubt be raised with Mr. Baker when he is in Moscow next week and we ought at least to have put our views to the Americans on them before then. And although we cannot have overt Four Power consultations on German unification, the Prime Minister is quite clear that we ought to be discussing the problems with the Russians as well as the Americans and French.

I am copying this letter and enclosure to Simon Webb (Ministry of Defence) and to Sonia Phippard (Cabinet Office).

*Yours sincerely,
C.D. Powell*

C.D. POWELL

Stephen Wall, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

"Her Excellency

The Right Hon. Margaret Thatcher
Prime Minister of Great Britain

Dear Mrs. Thatcher,

Immediately after his visit to Moscow the Chairman of Council of Ministers of the GDR H.Modrow put forward major proposals on the way to German unity. In this connection I would like in condensed form to share with You some considerations.

In principle the Soviet leadership supports the initiative of H.Modrow. However, it does not mean that we give "green light" to hasty decisions and actions. The movement towards unification of Germany should develop without disrupting stability. It should be synchronized with all-European process. This task cannot be fulfilled at once. It will need some transitional stages. H.Modrow's idea of stage-by-stage approach on the basis of contractual community and confederation corresponds just to that task.

The efforts of the GDR government even more so need support because it finds itself now under strong pressure, including pressure from certain political forces of the FRG. H.Modrow himself tries to attach to the process of unification an orderly character, underlines the importance of the four powers' responsibility for German affairs.

We also believe that nobody lifted this responsibility from us, including the responsibility on the agreement on a special status of West Berlin.

I remember well, Mrs. Prime Minister, our talks with You in Moscow and London, which also touched the German issue. I think, there are grounds to say that our approaches are close. We appreciate Your considered position, share Your view, that German unification should not create difficulties for European politics and relationship between East and West.

The present conditions, as it seems to us, call for more active consultations between the four powers, including on the question of West Berlin. Studying all these issues on a bilateral basis has practical political sense as well.

I believe, our mutual task - to follow with all the attention the course of German - German affairs and not to allow dangerous crises to happen, which can shake Europe, and not only Europe.

I would like to inform You confidentially that I sent a message to Chancellor H.Kohl and invited him to come to Moscow on February 9 in order to hold a short unofficial working meeting.

Yours respectfully,

M. Gorbachev

Moscow, Kremlin
February 2, 1990"

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File
DA
[Signature]

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*gem many.
C.D. Powell*

C.D. POWELL

Stephen Wall, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

ST U MASTER
OPS
PRIME MINISTER
PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL No. T19/90

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Yours respectfully,

M. Gorbachev

Moscow, Kremlin
February 2, 1990"

Pl. file. (Remains
from the Grabacher to
the PM delivered
on 3 February)
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В принципе в советском руководстве инициативу Х.Модрова поддерживают. Но это не значит, что мы даем "зеленый свет" поспешным решениям и действиям. Движение в сторону объединения Германии должно развиваться, не нарушая стабильности, быть синхронизированным с общеевропейским процессом. Эта задача не может быть выполнена разом, потребуются какие-то переходные периоды. В плане Х.Модрова идея поэтапного подхода на основе договорного сообщества и конфедерации как раз отвечает такой задаче.

Мы тоже считаем, что эту ответственность с нас никто не снимал, в том числе и по соглашению об особом статусе Западного Берлина.

Я хорошо помню, госпожа премьер-министр, наши беседы с Вами в Москве и Лондоне, затрагивавшие и германский вопрос. Думаю, есть основания сказать, что наши подходы близки. Мы ценим Вашу взвешенную позицию, разделяем точку зрения о том, что германское объединение не должно создавать трудностей и проблем для европейской политики и взаимоотношений между Востоком и Западом.

В создавшихся условиях более активно, как нам кажется, должны быть задействованы консультации четырех держав, в том числе по Западному Берлину. Практический политический смысл имеет проработка всех этих вопросов и на двусторонней основе.

Думается, наша общая забота — со всем вниманием следить за течением германо-германских дел и не допустить опасных кризисов, которые могут потрясти Европу, и не только ее.

Хочу доверительно сообщить Вам, что я направил послание канцлеру Г.Колу и пригласил его прибыть 9 февраля в Москву для проведения краткой неофициальной рабочей встречи.

С уважением,

М.ГОРБАЧЕВ

Москва, Кремль
2 февраля 1990 года