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FM WASHINGTON
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELNO 487
OF 281545Z FEBRUARY 90
INFO PRIORITY MOSCOW, PARIS, BONN, UKDEL NATO, WARSAW

MY TELS 460 AND 461: GERMAN/POLISH BORDER
SUMMARY

1. KOHL'S STATEMENTS ON THE BORDER QUESTION AT HIS PRESS
CONFERENCE WITH PRESIDENT BUSH AT CAMP DAVID ATTRACT
CONCERNED CRITICISM.

DETAIL

2. SENATORS NUNN AND PELL RAISED THE ISSUE AT THE
WHITE HOUSE DURING A DISCUSSION ON NICARAGUA ON 27 FEBRUARY.
AFTERWARDS NUNN EXPRESSED DISAPPOINTMENT THAT THE CHANCELLOR
HAD NOT BEEN CLEARER DURING THE VISIT. QUOTE I THINK
THE WHOLE QUESTION OF BORDERS SHOULD BE PUT TO REST, CLEARLY,
BY CHANCELLOR KOHL. HE TAKES A POSITION THAT THIS CAN ONLY BE
DONE LEGALLY AFTER YOU HAVE A GERMAN REUNIFICATION. LEGALLY THAT
IS CORRECT, BUT I THINK HE OUGHT TO STATE HIS OWN POSITION,
UNEQUIVOCALLY, AS OTHER LEADERS IN GERMANY HAVE. UNQUOTE.
PELL SAID BLUNTLY THAT KOHL'S EQUIVOCATION ON POLAND WAS
UNACCEPTABLE. QUOTE WE SHOULD BE VERY CONCERNED WHEN CHANCELLOR
KOHL REFERS TO GERMAN UNIFICATION AS THE UNITY OF THE GERMAN
PEOPLE AND WHEN MODROW REFERS TO UNIFICATION AS PROVIDING
A FATHERLAND FOR THE GERMAN PEOPLE ONE HAS TO BE CAREFUL
WHEN PEOPLE TELL US THAT THE GERMANS HAVE GIVEN US ASSURANCES.
THAT IS WHAT PEOPLE SAID IN 1938. UNQUOTE. IN A CIRCULAR LETTER
ON THE HILL, SENATOR SIMON SAID THAT WHILE THE PROCESS OF
UNIFICATION WAS MOVING FAR MORE QUICKLY THAN PEOPLE IMAGINED
POSSIBLE, KOHL AND MODROW HAD YET FORMALLY TO RENOUNCE ALL
TERRITORIAL CLAIMS AGAINST POLAND. PUTTING THE ISSUE OF
TERRITORIAL ADJUSTMENTS TO BED WOULD FACILITATE GERMAN UNIFICATION
AND EASE FEARS ELSEWHERE.

3. KOHL'S ELECTORAL DILEMMA HAS BEEN ACKNOWLEDGED BUT, REPORTING ON
THE PRESS CONFERENCE, THE US PRESS NOTED THE
DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT'S CLEAR STATEMENT AND KOHL'S
POSITION QUOTE, WHICH STOPPED WELL SHORT OF THE SORT OF GUARANTEE
THAT THE ADMINISTRATION AND OTHERS WOULD LIKE TO HEAR UNQUOTE. THE
NEW YORK TIMES ADDED THAT BUSH AND BAKER QUOTE HAD HOPED THAT THEY
WOULD BE ABLE TO CAJOLE THE GERMAN CHANCELLOR TO ESTABLISH A
CLEAR CUT TIMETABLE FOR ADDRESSING THE BORDER QUESTION AND TO

MAKE SOME PUBLIC STATEMENTS THAT WOULD DEFUSE IT UNQUOTE, KOHL HAD FALLEN SHORT OF THIS.

4. IN AN EDITORIAL, THE WASHINGTON POST SAID THAT KOHL WAS QUOTE MAKING A SERIOUS MISTAKE IN CONTINUING TO PLAY WORD GAMES WITH THE ISSUE OF POLAND'S BORDERS IT IS DISQUIETING TO SEE A WEST GERMAN CHANCELLOR PAY SUCH DEFERENCE TO THE ULTRA NATIONALISTS. THAT WAY LIES REAL TROUBLE. UNQUOTE. THE NEW YORK TIMES SUGGESTS THAT IF KOHL QUOTE CANNOT SUMMON THE WORDS OR THE COURAGE TO SAY THEM, THEN OTHERS WILL HAVE TO, PREFERABLY OTHER WEST GERMAN LEADERS AND SINCE WORDS ALONE WILL NOT NOW BE VERY REASSURING, THEY CAN INVITE THE FOUR POWERS AND ULTIMATELY ALL WEST AND EAST EUROPEANS, TO GUARANTEE THOSE BORDERS AGAINST AGGRESSION KOHL HAS TO WELCOME GUARANTEES OF GERMANY'S EASTERN BORDER BY THE US, THE SOVIET UNION AND EUROPEAN COUNTRIES PREPARED TO RESIST WITH FORCE ANY AGGRESSION AGAINST THOSE BORDERS. IF HE CANNOT BRING HIMSELF TO DO THAT, MR VON WEIZSAECKER AND MR GENSCHER COULD JOIN WITH OTHER POLITICAL PARTIES TO CALL FOR GUARANTEES, AND PRESIDENT BUSH COULD JOIN WITH OTHER NATO ALLIES TO DO THE SAME. UNQUOTE.

5. THE ADMINISTRATION HAS DECLINED TO CRITICISE. THE WHITE HOUSE SPOKESMAN ACKNOWLEDGED ON 27 FEBRUARY THAT QUOTE WE HAVE DIFFERENT POSITIONS, BUT WE ARE NOT GOING TO EXPRESS THE FEELING OF ANY KIND OF CHARACTERISATION OF CHANCELLOR KOHL'S STATEMENT UNQUOTE.

6. COMMENT IN MY MIFT

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