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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

From the Secretary of State

13 March 1990

Dear Prime Minister,

Bonn, March 12

You will have seen the telegrams on substance. Kohl was much more relaxed than at my last meeting, and grateful for your message. He twice asked me to tell you that he would never trade German membership of NATO for German unification. Germany wanted no special status; she must be part of NATO and the EC. He had a tussle on his hands on NATO with the SPD. So far from speeding up German unification, he was trying to get a grip on it to slow it down.

I tried to pin down both Kohl and Genscher on the security issues, which seem to me the most important. Kohl mentioned five years as the possible time limit for stationing Soviet troops in East Germany. He would not be drawn on Articles 5 and 6 of the Treaty or on the defence of East Germany, beyond questioning whether there was an enemy any longer to defend it against. Genscher is thinking in terms of police stationed in barracks, and possibly the triggering of Articles 5 and 6 if something untoward occurred. Otherwise Articles 5 and 6 would apply once the Soviet troops were out.

The people who still make Kohl bristle are the Poles. He was very defensive about the events of last week, and refused to contemplate a meeting of the Six in

The Prime Minister

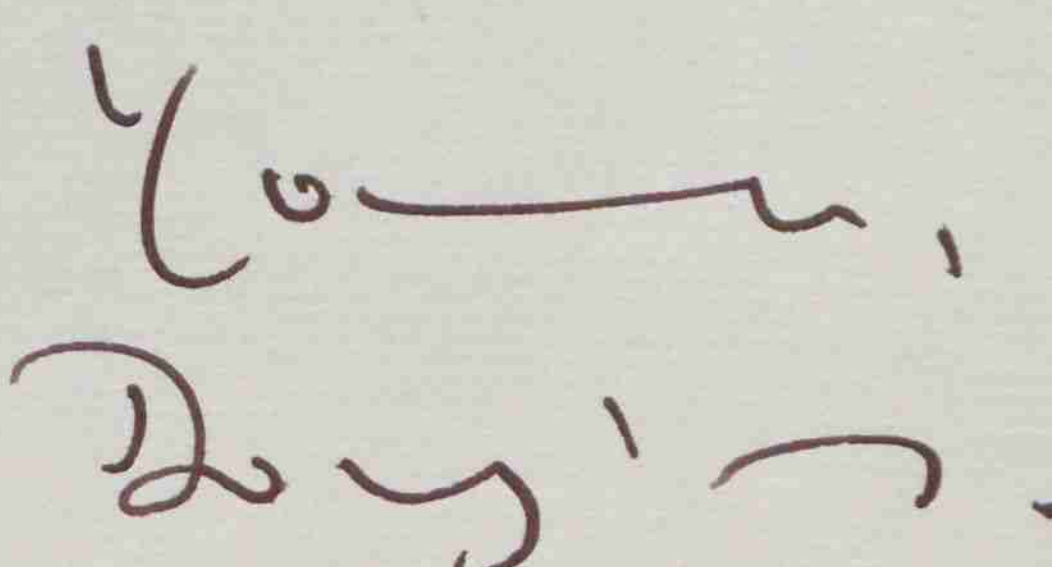


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Warsaw. On the other hand, Genscher has already conceded the alternative put forward by the Poles in Paris, namely that they should attend any meeting at which their frontiers were discussed. We must build on that and move towards a Treaty as rapidly as possible, though the first step will be the declarations of the two free German Parliaments endorsing the present frontiers. Kohl, in almost elegiac mood, said at nearly 60 he was past political ambition, and willing to stand down rather than be misunderstood by his friends. The Germans believe (rightly I think) that, in stiffening their stance on German neutrality, the Russians are building up a tactical negotiating position. But all depends on the flow of German opinion. The Russians may not concede the point until after the FRG elections, in case a SPD Government eases their problems. Brandt (an antique figurehead now) was equivocal on this point. That timing would upset the Kohl-Genscher plan, which is to present the results of the Six-power process, including NATO membership, to a CSCE Summit before the FRG elections.

The strong emphasis from Kohl and Genscher now is on the need to agree these external aspects before unification occurs - "no surprises for our friends". The German editors whom I met, and the British press corps, still feel that the pressures from the East, in particular continuing high emigration, may force a faster pace. For example, if East German prices rose towards West German levels but salaries stayed at a fraction of the West German level, then emigration might reach levels which would compel instant unification.

DOUGLAS HURD


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