



10 DOWNING STREET

Prime Minister

You ought to be
— Bonn Tel 388.
aware of this. It is
covered quite extensively
in the press.

I am sure you are
right on subversion. I
remember you telling
me at the time
what he had said.

Equally I think we

should just but
it away now. Its
old history, &
what matters is
the present situation
which is much
improved - as reflected
in your message to
Kohl.

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CONFIDENTIAL

DD 261800Z FCOLN

OO WARSA PARIS WASHI BREEC

FM BONNN TO FCOLN

261703Z MAR

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CONFIDENTIAL

DEDIP

FM BONN

TO DESKBY 261800Z FCO

TELNO 388

OF 261703Z MARCH 90

INFO IMMEDIATE WARSAW, PARIS, WASHINGTON, UKREP BRUSSELS

POLAND'S WESTERN BORDER

SUMMARY

1. TELTSCHIK EXPRESSES OFFICIALLY KOHL'S SHOCK AND ASTONISHMENT AT PRIME MINISTER'S REPLY TO 'DER SPIEGEL' ON ODER NEISSE FRONTIER. FEDERAL SPOKESMAN DESCRIBES QUOTATION ATTRIBUTED TO KOHL BY THE PRIME MINISTER AS INACCURATE. RECOMMENDATION ON BEST WAY OF DRAWING A LINE UNDER THIS EPISODE.

DETAIL

2. TELTSCHIK ASKED ME TO CALL TODAY, TO RECEIVE COMMENTS ON TWO SUBJECTS. THE FIRST WAS THE PRIME MINISTER'S REPLY TO DER SPIEGEL ABOUT THE ODER NEISSE FRONTIER. THE SECOND (REPORTED SEPARATELY) WAS THE PREPARATIONS FOR THE JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE ON THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE CHANCELLOR ON 30 MARCH. HARTMANN (WHO CALLS ON POWELL ON 27 MARCH) WAS PRESENT.

3. ON ODER NEISSE, TELTSCHIK SAID HE WISHED TO SAY OFFICIALLY THAT THE FEDERAL CHANCELLOR WAS SHOCKED AND ASTONISHED AT THE PRIME MINISTER'S REPLIES TO DER SPIEGEL. TELTSCHIK MADE 3 POINTS IN EXPLANATION OF KOHL'S REACTION:

(A) THE FEDERAL CHANCELLOR HAD NEVER REFUSED TO RECOGNISE THE ODER NEISSE FRONTIER. THE ONLY QUESTION HAD BEEN WHEN THAT FRONTIER SHOULD BE FORMALLY AND DEFINITELY RECOGNISED. THE CHANCELLOR HAD SAID IN THE CONVERSATION AT STRASBOURG THAT THE FRONTIER COULD BE FORMALLY RECOGNISED ONLY BY A UNITED GERMANY.

(B) INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS AT EUROPEAN COUNCILS WERE CONFIDENTIAL. KOHL WAS SURPRISED THAT THE PRIME MINISTER HAD QUOTED A REMARK ALLEGEDLY MADE AT ONE.

(C) KOHL WAS SURPRISED AT THE PRIME MINISTER'S INTERPRETATION OF THE POSITION OF THE GERMAN COURTS. THE FEDERAL CONSTITUTIONAL COURT IN 1975 HAD UPHELD THE WARSAW TREATY AND HAD SAID, IN LINE WITH THE POSITION OF THE UK AND THE OTHER ALLIES, THAT THE FINAL LEGAL FIXING OF THE FRONTIER SHOULD OCCUR IN A PEACE SETTLEMENT FOR GERMANY.

4. TELTSCHIK CONTINUED THAT THIS EPISODE HAD AFFECTED THE CLIMATE BETWEEN LONDON AND BONN. IT WAS A MOST UNHAPPY DEVELOPMENT. THE QUESTIONING OF THE CHANCELLOR'S POSITION WOULD UNDERMINE HIS SO FAR SUCCESSFUL ATTEMPTS TO COMBAT THE REPUBLIKANER, WHOSE ENTRY INTO THE BUNDESTAG NEXT DECEMBER WOULD HARDLY PLEASE THE ALLIES.

5. I SAID THAT I WOULD REPORT TELTSCHIK'S REMARKS. THE ODER NEISSE FRONTIER WAS A MATTER OF WIDESPREAD INTEREST, ON WHICH OTHERS AS WELL AS BRITAIN HAD CLEAR VIEWS. TELTSCHIK ACKNOWLEDGED THAT FRANCE WAS ONE OF THOSE OTHERS. I SAID THAT, AS THE PRIME MINISTER'S RECENT MESSAGE TO KOHL HAD SHOWN, HMG WERE GLAD THAT IT HAD NOW BEEN AGREED THAT THERE SHOULD BE A TREATY TO FIX THE ODER NEISSE FRONTIER FINALLY.

6. THE FEDERAL SPOKESMAN, KLEIN, THIS AFTERNOON TOLD A PRESS CONFERENCE THAT THE CHANCELLOR CONSIDERED HIMSELF TO HAVE BEEN QUOTED INACCURATELY BY THE PRIME MINISTER. HE HAD BEEN REPORTED AS SAYING AFTER DINNER AT STRASBOURG DURING THE LAST EUROPEAN COUNCIL THAT 'I WILL NOT GUARANTEE, I WILL NOT ACCEPT THE PRESENT BORDERS'. THIS REFLECTED NEITHER THE LETTER NOR THE SPIRIT OF WHAT HE HAD ACTUALLY SAID. THE CHANCELLOR ALSO MOREOVER REGARDED AS 'UNFOUNDED AND UNUSUAL' WHAT THE PRIME MINISTER HAD SAID ABOUT THE ROLE OF THE GERMAN COURTS.

7. KLEIN THEN GAVE THE PRESS (SEE MIFT) THE FEDERAL CHANCELLOR'S OWN VERSION OF WHAT KOHL HAD SAID AT STRASBOURG, AND COMMENTED ALSO ON THE ATTITUDE OF THE FEDERAL CONSTITUTIONAL COURT.

COMMENT

8. I RECOMMEND THAT WE SHOULD NOW SEEK TO DRAW A LINE UNDER THIS EXCHANGE. SINCE IT RELATES TO AN EPISODE SOME MONTHS BACK, THE BEST WAY OF DOING SO MIGHT BE TO TELL THE MEDIA SIMPLY THAT THE PRIME MINISTER'S VIEW OF THE SITUATION NOW REACHED IN RELATION TO POLAND'S WESTERN BORDER IS SUMMED UP IN HER MESSAGE TO KOHL OF 7 MARCH (YOUR TELNO 167).

MALLABY

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