

No. 129

*Mr Hurd to Sir C. Mallaby (Bonn)*<sup>1</sup>

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From Private Secretary

*Secretary of State's call on Herr Genscher: German Unification*

*Summary*

1. Genscher anxious about instability in GDR. Reiterates continued FRG commitment to NATO and European Community and to strengthening the CSCE. Accepts need for discussion of implications for NATO and the EC of German unification but does not favour too much planning in a vacuum, given dynamics of the situation and need to await outcome of GDR elections.

*Detail*

2. The Secretary of State had a 50 minute meeting with Genscher this afternoon. The principal topic was German unification. The Secretary of State asked whether the GDR would get through to the elections on 18 March. Genscher hoped so. It would not have been possible for them to last until 6 May. The decision to bring forward the elections had been the right one, though he had had doubts about it. Any stability in the GDR was not the result of the authority of the state or individual politicians but solely down to the reasonable behaviour of the people. The situation was very unstable and would become more so (a point on which

<sup>1</sup> Repeated for information Priority to Washington, Moscow, UKDEL NATO, Warsaw, East Berlin, BMG Berlin, Paris.

Genscher several times repeated his anxiety). The best test of stability would be the figure for departures. If public opinion in the GDR was disappointing [*sic*: ?disappointed], the figure would increase. There were exaggerated expectations but the new government could not bring an early substantial change to the way of life of its citizens. All it could offer was a new beginning. That was why the FRG needed to offer the GDR the political perspective of unity and the economic perspective of substantial help. Currency was the key: good money for good work. The prospect of unity was difficult but the GDR could not be treated like a foreign country. Its problems would be easier to solve if the people stayed there rather than migrated to the FRG. In this context Genscher commended Gorbachev's recent comments on unification which had been made in order to give hope to Germans in the GDR.

3. The Secretary of State said that we understood the dynamic facing the Germans but there were several areas where the Allies and partners needed to get into discussion, namely over NATO, Community membership, Four Power issues and the CSCE. What was the right timing for these discussions? They had to be tackled at some time—obviously showing sensitivity to the election process. The previous day in Brussels Genscher had spoken about private discussions with France and Britain.

4. Genscher said a number of issues (social, health, investment, monetary, commercial infrastructure) could all be handled below what he called the threshold of the Alliance and the Four Powers. The question was how all this was going to take place in relation to unification which was not a decision for the FRG alone but also for the GDR. He did not know how the democratic leadership of the GDR would define their decisions after the election. He thought they would want unity in the near future to help solve their difficult internal problems. In the meantime, the FRG could speak only for itself. The German Government wanted neither to extend nor to leave NATO. They wanted the two alliances to become integral parts of all-European structures. His own conversation the previous day with the Polish Foreign Minister had been revealing. The Pole had agreed with Genscher that the neutralisation of Germany would be wrong. If that had been the message coming from the British, French or some other NATO Foreign Minister that would have been understandable. Coming from the Poles it had special importance. The Federal German Government often said it did not want to isolate itself and it stood by that. They would promote the integration of the European Community and, in parallel, the development of the CSCE process. We would all live to see of what enormous importance the CSCE process was both substantially and to help save the face of the Soviet Union. The CSCE summit, devoted to the future of Europe, would be an important vehicle for helping the Soviet Union to come to terms with the erosion of the Warsaw Pact. Genscher added that when he talked about not wanting to extend NATO that applied to other states beside the GDR. The Russians must have some assurance that if, for example, the Polish Government left the Warsaw Pact one day, they would not join NATO the next.

5. The Secretary of State said that clearly there would need to be a NATO discussion about doctrine and posture but Genscher seemed to be saying that the discussion could not usefully begin yet. On the other hand, military commanders hated uncertainty. Genscher said he saw no reason why the military consequences of the reduced threat in Europe should not be discussed straight away. But the future political framework was subject to a dynamic process and we should not work on the basis of blueprints. Did that mean, the Secretary of State asked, letting

the position develop? Genscher assented, but added that we needed a certain number of fixed points. One of them was the EC. Another was NATO. The third was the CSCE process, which Germany wanted to promote. One could not be separated from the other.

6. The Secretary of State asked how Genscher assessed the Soviet position. They had moved on unification. How did they now stand on the presence of their troops in the GDR and US troops in the FRG? Was it still their ambition to see US troops withdraw from Germany or did they see them as part of the new order?

7. Genscher said that to answer the question one needed to understand the basis of the US and Soviet presence. In part, it was the consequence of World War II. But the Soviet Union was also geographically a part of Europe. They were there whether we liked it or not. In the case of the Americans we had created two instruments which included them in the European process: NATO and the CSCE Final Act. The Warsaw Pact meant that the Soviet Union could link to itself countries who were in the Russian front garden. For the US, the Alliance afforded them the opportunity to be present in Europe. Setting aside the questions of rights acquired as a result of World War II (arguments which did not impress anyone very much), the Western Alliance had a different quality from the Warsaw Pact as far as European stability was concerned. For that reason the Americans would continue to be present in Europe—and that would not be against the will of the Russians. Malta had shown the way the Soviet Union was moving. At the same time, Russia attached importance to keeping its forces in the GDR for psychological reasons but not necessarily at present levels. This question of the number of Soviet troops in the GDR did not necessarily have to do with German unity or GDR membership of the Warsaw Pact. But Genscher did now know what the position of the new GDR government would be.

8. The Secretary of State commented that the people of the GDR or a united Germany would probably want to have Soviet troops out. Genscher said that different countries were taking different positions. The Hungarians and the Czechs wanted the Russians out. The Poles wanted Russian numbers reduced: the Poles knew they were touching on a raw nerve. Discussion of these issues was too static in what was a dynamic situation. Quite soon a number of questions would present themselves in a different way. Of one point he was quite sure: the Germans should not be given a status which took them out of Europe. Genscher did not believe that what Modrow said about German neutrality reflected his master's voice. He could not imagine the Russians wanting a Germany outside European structures. That was the importance of the CSCE. It offered a partnership and a means of showing the Soviet Union that we did not want to shift the balance of power. Genscher then repeated his concern about the internal situation in the GDR. The Russians would not mobilise their forces. Nor could one say that the answer lay with Four-Power responsibilities. The most urgent task was to avoid chaos in the GDR. He agreed with the Secretary of State's comment that this was not a matter of sending in the troops or police to keep order but of persuading people to keep their suitcases in their rooms. That in turn meant practical help. It also meant making moves towards economic and monetary unity between the FRG and the GDR. That could not happen before the elections, but even talking about it had a positive effect. Productivity in the GDR had declined by at least 5 per cent. People in the GDR were doing more talking than working.

9. The Secretary of State said he had tried to show his understanding of these problems in his speech in Bonn that day. He was sure Genscher would keep us in

### *German Unification, 1989–1990*

the picture hour by hour. We must begin to think about these questions even if we could not yet take discussions forward. He referred again to the EC aspects of the problem and the need to consider how to handle Russian pressure for Four-Power talks. Genscher referred to Baker's visit to Moscow. The real task was to open up perspectives which would appeal to the peaceful millions in Europe. We should do what we could to preserve stability.



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